



"This Booke is mine.

Irene Andrews:

Ahd I yt Loos Ahd you yt find,
I PRAY you HARTELY to BE so
kynd,that you will TAKE A LetEL
PAYhe to see my Booke Brothe
home AGAyne"

2/2

7-8-4
21st
1200

Irene D. Andrew
Chase Hotel
St Louis - Dec' 34

LONDON CLUBS

VOLUME ONE



THE ST. JAMES' CLUB
(FORMERLY COVENTRY HOUSE)

From a Water-colour Drawing by W. Walcot

LONDON CLUBS

Their History and Treasures

BY

RALPH NEVILL

Author of "The Merry Past," "Light Come, Light Go," etc.

VOLUME ONE

Illustrated

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME ONE

	FACING PAGE
THE ST. JAMES' CLUB	<i>Frontispiece</i>
BADGES AND RING OF THE SUBLIME SOCIETY OF BEEFSTEAKS	38
BADGE OF THE AD LIBITUM CLUB	38
WHITE'S CLUB PREVIOUS TO 1811	78
PROMISED HORRORS OF THE FRENCH INVASION, BY GILLRAY	100

NOTE

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

The Origin of Clubs in Coffee-houses and Taverns	PAGES 1-32
--	---------------

CHAPTER II

Curious Clubs of the Past—Pratt's—Beefsteak Clubs, Old and New	33-62
---	-------

CHAPTER III

Clubs of St. James's Street — Boodle's, Arthur's, and White's	63-98
--	-------

CHAPTER IV

Brooks's, the Cocoa-tree, and the Thatched House	99-134
--	--------

CHAPTER V

Changes in Club Life and Ways	135-155
-------------------------------	---------

CHAPTER VI

Elections—Committees—Regulations—Rules	156-177
--	---------

CHAPTER VII

Late Sittings — Fines — Cards — Characters — Supper Clubs	178-208
--	---------

CONTENTS

CHAPTER VIII

	PAGES
The Travellers'—Oriental—St. James'—Turf—Marlborough—Isthmian—Windham—Bachelors'—Union—Carlton—Junior Carlton—Conservative—Devonshire—Reform	209—236

CHAPTER IX

The National—Oxford and Cambridge—United University—New University—New Oxford and Cambridge—United Service—Army and Navy—Naval and Military—Guards'—Royal Naval Club—Caledonian—Junior Athenæum	237—256
---	---------

CHAPTER X

The Dilettanti—The Club—Cosmopolitan—Kit-Kat—Royal Societies'—Burlington Fine Arts—Athenæum—Alfred	257—284
--	---------

CHAPTER XI

The Garrick—Jockey Club at Newmarket—Royal Yacht Squadron at Cowes—Conclusion	285—310
---	---------

INDEX

311—316

LONDON CLUBS

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF CLUBS IN COFFEE-HOUSES AND TAVERNS

THE modern club, with its luxuries and comforts, has its origin in the tavern and coffee-house of a long-past age. The resorts in question have long since entirely changed their character, although they were once important features of London life, and were used by all classes for purposes of conviviality and conversation.

The appellation “club” seems to have come into use at the time when coffee-houses began to be popular in London. The first notable London club, of course, was the Mermaid, in Broad Street, which was supposed to have been founded by Raleigh, and which was the reputed scene of many witty combats between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. The latter himself originated another club—the Apollo—which had its meetings at the Devil Tavern, near Temple Bar.

In course of time many landlords perceived the advantage which would accrue to their business from the setting apart of special rooms for privileged

customers ; and gradually a number of fairly exclusive clubs came into being.

Thus Tom's, a coffee-house till 1764, in that year, by a guinea subscription, was easily converted into a fashionable club. In the same way White's and the Cocoa-tree changed their character from chocolate-house to club. When once a house had customers enough of standing and good repute, well acquainted with each other, it was quite worth while to purchase the power of excluding all but subscribers, and to turn the place into a club ; for by such a proceeding undesirable characters, who could obtain constant admission to an open house, were at once kept outside the doors.

The evolution of the modern club has been so simple that it can be traced with great ease. First the tavern or coffee-house, where a certain number of people met on special evenings for purposes of social conversation, and incidentally consumed a good deal of liquid refreshment ; then the beginnings of the club proper—some well-known house of refreshment being taken over from the proprietor by a limited number of clients for their own exclusive use, and the landlord retained as manager ; and finally the palatial modern club, not necessarily sociable, but replete with every comfort, and owned by the members themselves. In such places, however, the old spirit of club-life is generally lost. Dr. Johnson, for example, can be imagined passing through the portals of one of these huge buildings, and saying : “Sir, this may be a palace, but it is no club.” There is no doubt that in a great measure he would be right.

It is believed that the first house in Pall Mall ever used as a club was No. 86, originally built for Edward, Duke of York, brother of George III. It was opened as a “subscription house,” and called the Albion Hotel towards the end of the last century.

In the early part of the eighteenth century there were said to be no fewer than 2,000 coffee-houses in London. Every profession, trade, class, party, had its favourite coffee-house. The lawyers discussed law or literature, criticized the last new play, or retailed the legal scandal at Nando's or the Grecian, not very far away from the Temple. At such places the young bloods of the Inns of Court paraded their gowns in the morning, and swaggered in their lace coats and Mechlin ruffles at night, after the theatre. City men met to discuss the rise and fall of stocks, and to settle the rate of insurance, at Garraway's or Jonathan's; parsons exchanged University gossip or discussed points of theology at Truby's or at Child's, in St. Paul's Churchyard; whilst military men mustered to grumble over their grievances at Old or Young Man's, near Charing Cross. The St. James's and the Smyrna were the headquarters of the Whig politicians, whereas the Tories frequented the Cocoa-tree or Ozinda's, in St. James's Street; Scotchmen had their house of call at Forrest's, Frenchmen at Giles's or Old Slaughter's, in St. Martin's Lane; the gamesters shook their elbows in White's and the chocolate-houses round Covent Garden; and the leading wits gathered at Will's, Button's, or Tom's, in Great Russell Street, where, after the

theatre, there was piquet and the best of conversation till midnight. At all these places, except a few of the most aristocratic coffee or chocolate houses of the West End, smoking was allowed.

Many of these old taverns must have been exceedingly comfortable places, and the few which survive have an especial charm. They carry one's thoughts irresistibly to the days when Dr. Johnson blew his cloud by the side of an old-fashioned fireplace, and occasionally floored some unhappy wight with the sledge-hammer of his conversation.

One of the last, if not the last, hostgeries, which still retains its ancient appearance, is the Cheshire Cheese. This well-known house is half-way up Fleet Street, on the northern side. It remains, I believe, substantially as it was when, seven years after the Restoration, it was rebuilt on the site of that older Cheshire Cheese where Shakespeare and many other Elizabethan wits were wont to meet.

Ben Jonson was a frequent visitor, and here occurred his dispute with Sylvester as to which of them could make the best couplet in the shortest time. The latter began :

“I, Sylvester,
Kiss’d your sister.”

The other’s retort was :

“I, Ben Jonson,
Kiss’d your wife.”

“But that’s not rhyme,” said Sylvester. “No,” said Jonson, “but it’s true.”

The original courtyard of the Cheshire Cheese is

now roofed over with glass, and here may be seen some interesting old prints. These include two by H. Bunbury—"A City Hunt" and "Hyde Park, 1780"; while others are, "Destruction of the Bastille, July 14, 1789," after a painting by H. Singleton, and a line engraving by James Heath, from a painting by F. Wheatley of "The Riot in Broad Street on the 17th of June, 1773."

Dr. Johnson is supposed to have passed many an evening here, and from his time down to the present day unbroken links of tradition connect the Cheshire Cheese of the twentieth century with the Cheshire Cheese of the eighteenth.

The seat on which legend reports that the redoubtable lexicographer sat is one of the most treasured relics of the dining-room. Above it hangs a copy of the famous portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, now preserved in the National Gallery. Underneath may be read the following inscription : "The Favourite Seat of Dr. Johnson. Born 18th Septr., 1709. Died 13th Decr., 1784. In him a noble understanding and a masterly intellect were united with grand independence of character and unfailing goodness of heart, which won the admiration of his own age and remain as recommendations to the reverence of posterity. 'No, Sir ! there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness has been produced as by a good tavern.'—JOHNSON."

A number of quaint pictures and prints are to be found scattered over the house.

Upstairs is another copy of Sir Joshua's oil-painting of the Doctor. This, it is said, dates back

to Johnson's time, and was painted in order that it might adorn the room at the Mitre, in Chancery Lane, where the club founded by Dr. Johnson first held its meetings. Dr. Johnson's Mitre has long since been pulled down, but the club he founded still exists, and it meets several times a year in what was formerly the coffee-room. This is now known as "William's room," on account of the portrait of William Simpson which hangs over the fireplace. William began to be a waiter at Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese Chop-house in 1829, and his portrait, as the inscription below says, "was subscribed for by the gentlemen frequenting the coffee-room, and presented to Mr. Dolamore (the landlord) to be handed down as an heirloom to all future landlords of 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese,' Wine Office Court, Fleet Street." The name of the artist is unknown.

In the opposite room is a picture of another waiter—a portrait of Henry Todd, as the inscription informs us, who commenced as waiter at Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese February 27, 1812. It was painted by Wageman, July 1827, and "subscribed for by the gentlemen frequenting the coffee-room, and presented to Mr. Dolamore (the landlord) in trust to be handed down as an heirloom to all future landlords of the Old Cheshire Cheese, Wine Office Court, Fleet Street."

Besides being the meeting-place of the Mitre Club, the Cheshire Cheese is used by a number of clubs resembling somewhat those which were so popular with a long-vanished generation. These are: The Johnson Club, founded about twenty-five

years ago ; the Sawdust Club, founded 1906 ; "Ourselves," founded 1897 ; St. Dunstan's, founded 1890 ; the Rump Steak Club ; the Dickens Club. The Johnson Club is literary and social in character, and consists of thirty-one members, who sup together annually on or about December 13th, the anniversary of the Doctor's death. Various other meetings are held throughout the year.

The Doctor was certainly the most typical club-man of a past age, and his name is connected with quite a number of social clubs which held their meetings at coffee-houses and taverns. Indeed, no more clubbable man than the writer of the famous Dictionary ever lived ; but, then, sociability was the main object of the clubs of his day, whereas the modern tendency is more towards comfort and efficient management than anything else. In most large modern clubs quite a number of members are totally unknown to their fellows, and there is no reason why a member should speak to anyone at all unless he wishes to do so. The majority of the larger modern clubs are in reality merely comfortable caravanserais — hotels receiving a certain number of selected visitors who recognize no social obligations within the club walls except such as regulate ordinary civilized behaviour.

Dr. Johnson founded several social clubs at the taverns and coffee-houses which he loved to frequent. One of these was the King's Head, Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, a famous beefsteak house, and here he spent every Tuesday evening in conversation with the members of a social club of his own foundation.

At the Queen's Arms, in St. Paul's Churchyard, the Doctor in later years founded a club of a similar sort, and Boswell records that he was also desirous of having a City club, the members of which he suggested that Boswell should collect. "Only," added the great lexicographer, "don't let there be any patriots."

Yet another club instituted by Dr. Johnson was one which met thrice a week at the Essex Head, in Essex Street, Strand, at the time when that tavern was kept by Samuel Greaves—an old servant of Mr. Thrale's. Failure to attend was penalized by a fine of twopence.

The Mitre Tavern in Fleet Street, so often referred to by Boswell, was Dr. Johnson's favourite supper-place, and here was planned the celebrated tour to the Hebrides. It is interesting to remember, in this connection, that Chamberlain Clarke, who died in 1831, aged ninety-two, was the last survivor of those friends with whom Dr. Johnson forgathered at the Mitre.

Peele's Coffee-house, at Nos. 177, 178, Fleet Street, which afterwards became a tavern, was also supposed to have been a haunt of Dr. Johnson, whose portrait, painted on the keystone of a chimney-piece, for years after his death formed one of the attractions of the house. The artist was supposed to have been Sir Joshua Reynolds. Peele's was once noted for its collection of old newspapers. Here were preserved files from the following dates : *The Gazette*, 1759; *Times*, 1780; *Morning Chronicle*, 1773; *Morning Post*, 1773; *Morning Herald*, 1784; *Morning Advertiser*, 1794.

Nearly every literary man of that time had his favourite coffee-house.

George's, at No. 213 Strand, near Temple Bar, was the resort of Shenstone, who found it an economical place. Probably it was for this reason that the eccentric Sir James Lowther, a very rich man, but penurious, also went there. On his first visit he got the proprietors to change a piece of silver in order to pay twopence for his coffee. A few days later he returned expressly to tell the woman that she had given him a bad halfpenny, and demanded another in exchange for it.

Clients of this coffee-house could read pamphlets and papers for a very moderate subscription.

London hours were very different in those days. Three o'clock, or at latest four, was the dining hour of the most fashionable people, for in the country no such late hours had been adopted. In London, therefore, the men began to assemble soon after six at the coffee-house they frequented—unless, indeed, they were setting in for hard drinking, which seems to have prevailed much less in private houses than in taverns.

The conversation varied in different coffee-houses. In those about the Temple, legal matters formed the principal subject of discussion. On the other hand, at Daniel's, the Welsh coffee-house in Fleet Street, it was mostly of births, pedigrees, and descents; Child's and the Chapter, upon glebes, tithes, advowsons, rectories, and lectureships; North's, undue elections, false pollings, scrutinies, and the like; Hamlin's, infant baptism, lay ordination, free-will, election, and reprobation; Batson's,

the prices of pepper, indigo, and saltpetre ; and all those about the Exchange, where the merchants met to transact their affairs, were in a perpetual hurry about stock-jobbing—cheating, and tricking widows and orphans, and committing spoil and rapine on the public, malicious people said.

In some coffee-houses and taverns political feeling ran high. One noted chop-house near Holborn lost its business owing to the democratic character of a number of its frequenters, and eventually had to be shut up. A new landlord, however, seeking to restore its prosperity, exhibited the sign of the King's Head, referring to which a friend said to him : “ Do you think your new sign will keep away old customers ? Why, there is not one of them but would like as much as ever to have a chop at the King's Head.”

The Chapter Coffee-house in Paternoster Row, an ancient building with low rooms and heavy beams, was in the eighteenth century the resort of all the booksellers and publishers ; and the literary hacks, the critics, and even the wits, used to go there in search of ideas or employment. This was the place about which Chatterton wrote, in those delusive letters he sent to his mother at Bristol, while he was starving in London. The Chapter also retained traditions of Oliver Goldsmith.

In later years it became the tavern frequented by University men and country clergymen who were up in London for a few days, and, having no private friends or access into society, were glad to learn what was going on in the world of letters,

from the conversation which they were sure to hear in the coffee-room.

At one time leather tokens were issued by the proprietor ; and the Chapter was noted for being entirely managed by men, no women servants being kept.

In the north-east corner of the coffee-room was a box known as the Witenagemote, which in the early morning was occupied by a group of individuals nicknamed the Wet Paper Club. The name was derived from their habit of opening the papers as soon as these were brought in by the newsman, and reading them before they were dried by the waiter ; a dry paper was regarded as a stale commodity. In the afternoon another party enjoyed the wet evening papers.

A gentleman who was considered a fixture in this box was Mr. Hammond, a Coventry manufacturer, who evening after evening, for nearly forty-five years, was always to be found in the same place, and during the entire period was well known for his severe and often able comments on the events of the day. Here he pontificated throughout the days of Wilkes, of the American War, and of the French War, and, being on the side of liberty, was constantly in opposition to almost everyone else.

The Chapter continued to be a coffee-house up to 1854, when it became a tavern.

The Royal Exchange was the resort of all the trading part of the City, foreign and domestic, from half an hour after one till near three in the afternoon ; but the better sort generally met in the

Exchange Alley a little before, at three celebrated coffee - houses called Garraway's, Robin's, and Jonathan's. In the first the people of quality who had business in the City, and the most considerable and wealthy citizens, congregated. In the third met buyers and sellers of stock.

The Royal Exchange Coffee-house resembled a gaming-house more than anything else, being full of gamesters, with the same sharp, intent looks, with the difference only that there it was selling of Bank stock, East India, South Sea, and lottery tickets, instead of the cards and dice dear to ordinary gamblers.

The British Coffee-house in the West End was much frequented by Scotchmen, whilst a mixture of all sorts went to the Smyrna, not very far away. There were other little coffee-houses much frequented in this neighbourhood—Young Man's for officers, Old Man's for stockjobbers, paymasters, and courtiers, and Little Man's for sharpers. Here there were two or three faro tables upstairs.

After the theatre fashionable men went to Tom's and Will's Coffee-houses, where they played piquet and indulged in conversation. Here you might see blue and green ribbons and stars sitting familiarly with private gentlemen, and talking with the same freedom as if they had left their quality and degrees of distance at home—a sight which amazed foreigners not used to the liberty of speech permitted in England.

A favourite resort of literary men was the Percy Coffee-house in Rathbone Place, Oxford Street. This was used by Thomas Byerley and Joseph

Robertson, who together produced the “Percy Anecdotes” in 1820, writing as Sholto and Reuben Percy. A large sum was realized by the work in question, which began in 1820 and ran into forty-four parts.

The West End coffee-houses were often disturbed by the eccentricities of the “bloods.” A wild band, for instance, frequented the Royal Chocolate-house in St. James’s Street, where on one occasion a dispute at hazard produced a quarrel, which became general throughout the room ; and, as they fought with their swords, three gentlemen were mortally wounded. The affray was at length ended by the interposition of the Royal Guards, who were compelled to knock the parties down indiscriminately with the butt-ends of their muskets, as entreaties and commands were of no avail. On this occasion a footman of Colonel Cunningham’s, greatly attached to his master, rushed through the swords, seized and literally carried him out by force without injury.

Lord Camelford, of duelling notoriety, one evening entered the Prince of Wales Coffee-house, Conduit Street, and, as was his usual custom, sat down and began to read the papers. A dashing fellow, and in his own opinion a first-rate blood, happening to come in, threw himself on the opposite seat of the same box, and, in a consequential tone, bawled : “ Waiter ! bring me a pint of madeira and a couple of wax candles, and put them in the next box.” He then drew over to himself Lord Camelford’s candles, and began to read, which proceeding merely caused his lordship to look indignant, whilst he continued reading his paper. The waiter soon

reappeared, and announced the completion of the gentleman's commands, who immediately lounged round to his own box. Lord Camelford, having now finished his paragraph, called out, in a mimicking tone : "Waiter! bring me a pair of snuffers." These being quickly brought, his lordship laid down his paper, walked round the table at which the "blood" sat, snuffed out both the candles, and retired to his seat. Boiling with rage and fury, the indignant beau roared out : "Waiter, waiter ! who the devil is this fellow that dares to insult a gentleman ? What is he ? What do they call him ?" "Lord Camelford, sir," replied the other in a tone scarcely audible. The coxcomb, horror-struck at the name of the dangerous nobleman, said tremblingly, "What have I to pay ?" and, on being told, quietly laid down his money and sneaked away, leaving his madeira untasted.

Disturbances were frequently caused in coffee-houses by dashing bucks who attempted either to dominate or to upset the domination of others. At the west end of Cecil Court, in St. Martin's Lane, there existed, towards the end of the reign of George II, Pon's Coffee-house, much frequented by foreigners of distinction, officers, and men about town. In the course of time the foreigners began to dominate this place, always contriving to get one of themselves into the chair, and occupying special seats which were kept for them alone. This created much ill-feeling, and at length reached the ears of the celebrated Lord Tyrawley, at that time a gay spark about town. Discussing the foreign ascendancy which prevailed in this place, Lord Tyrawley said, in his vigorous way : "It is all your own fault.

The Frenchmen see you are afraid of them, and therefore behave with insolence. I am sure they are cowards, and if I was in the company I would undertake to insult the lot with impunity, and leave the room without being questioned or prevented by any one of them.” This led to a conversation, which ended in a bet that Lord Tyrawley would carry his threat into execution, and on an appointed day he proceeded to action.

Having made arrangements with a confederate, his lordship entered the room in time enough to take his seat in the president’s chair unquestioned, according to the law of the place. Afterwards the confederate, pretending to be a stranger, seated himself unnoticed, in the same manner, in the deputy chairman’s place at the bottom. As the Frenchmen dropped in, one by one, they were surprised to perceive the posts of honour thus unusually occupied. They whispered and muttered to each other as their numbers increased, but at last took their seats anywhere they could. In tones of discontent, deep but not loud, one whispered to his neighbour : “ Connaissez-vous celui-là ?” pointing to the new president. “ Non.” “ Ni l’autre ?” “ Non.” “ Ni moi, non plus ; ma foi, c’est singulier ! Ah ! les drôles ! Eh bien, tout-à-l’heure le président viendra, et alors nous verrons comme tout cela va finir !” At last the French president arrived, and, finding the post of honour unexpectedly filled by the two dashing officers of rank, quietly took his seat, like his countrymen, where he could find it. The others, who were interested in the scene, seated themselves at the lower end of the table, whilst the few French

who had come early seated themselves as near to the new president as they could.

The two intruders enjoyed the scene in secret, but behaved with politeness and affability to all, in their respective circles, till at last dinner was served. Lord Tyrawley formally did the honours—tasted the soup, put on a critical look, and asked those who were near him to taste, and favour him with their opinions. They were surprised at his assurance, but several tasted, and said simultaneously, “Assez bien—comme à l’ordinaire—qu’en pensez-vous ?” and so on. Lord Tyrawley then exclaimed : “It is most execrable stuff, and only fit to be placed before pigs! Waiter” (the man crept forward trembling), “what do you bring this stuff here for ?” The astonished servant looked silently towards the Frenchmen, in the hopes of catching a hint, when Tyrawley, in a rage, vociferated: “Don’t answer me, sir ! take it away, and bring me the next dish—take it away instantly, I say!” So saying, he seized his own plate in both hands, raised it above his head, and then dashed it with all his force, with its flat bottom, into the midst of the soup, which spread, in a circular sheet, upon the table and the clothes of all who sat at that end of it. The Frenchmen started with horror and surprise, springing from their seats to save their clothes, while his confederate jumped up, exclaiming: “What do you mean by that, sir ?” “I mean to say,” said Lord Tyrawley, with provoking coolness, “the soup is very bad.” “Nonsense, sir,” said the apparently enraged deputy chairman ; “you have insulted every man here, and I will see that you give me immediate

satisfaction." "Oh, sir," said the Peer, very coolly, "if you are for that sport, I will indulge you at once." So saying, each took down his hat and sword with great dignity, and, the challenger strutting after the challenged, both descended into the courtyard. The bespattered foreigners, finding a duel was in progress, crowded the window for good places to see the sight, till it was quite full. The combatants took their ground, drew, and began a very furious-looking assault; one fought retreating, the other pushing him back till they were at the end of the court in St. Martin's Lane, when they took off their hats, bowed gracefully to the astonished Frenchmen, and walked away arm in arm, laughing and kissing their hands to the company they had left, leaving them to enjoy their spoiled dinner and well-greased clothes as they were best able.

The great dread of the peaceful citizens who frequented taverns and coffee-houses was an incursion by members of the clubs known as Bold Bucks and Hell-Fires—for the most part composed of deliberately abandoned villains. The Bold Bucks were given up to licentiousness of an unbridled kind; blind and bold love was their motto, and their main object seems to have been the assimilation of man to brute.

The Hell-Fires, as may be gathered from their appellation, aimed at an even more transcendent malignity, and derided the forms of religion as a trifle.

A regular code of etiquette was observed at coffee-houses. At most of these, though not at the fashion-

able West End ones, a penny was usually laid on the bar on entering, which entitled the guest to the use of the room and of the news-sheet. Every rank of life, except perhaps the very lowest, was represented at one or other of these houses. Men met there to transact business, talk politics, discuss the latest play or poem, to play dice or cards. To one man the coffee-house was an office for business, where he received, and from which he dated, his letters ; to another, a place in which to push his fortunes among patrons ; to most, a lounging-place in which to discuss the news and pass away the time. The advertisements of the day are full of allusions to them. One gentleman loses his watch or his sword, and will give a reward if they are returned to Tom's or Button's, "and no questions asked." Another, one Brown, "late City Marshall," will settle all affairs that he had in his hands while holding that office, if the persons interested will repair to "Mr. Gibbon's Coffee House at Charing Cross."

The first coffee-house—that is, the first house where coffee was sold to the public in England—is said to have been the George and Vulture, in George Yard, Lombard Street, a house still in existence.

About 1652 a Turkey merchant, Mr. Edwards by name, is supposed to have brought to London from Smyrna a Ragusan youth, Pasqua Rosee by name, specially to prepare coffee for him every morning. This servant he eventually allowed to sell the new-fashioned infusion publicly, and eventually the Ragusan established the first coffee-house in London, at St. Michael's Abbey, Cornhill, under

the title of Pasqua Rosee's Inn, afterwards known to fame as the George and Vulture.

The old Rainbow in Fleet Street, now known as Groom's, was the second coffee-house ; but the owner of the Rainbow apparently did not purvey a very attractive form of the new beverage, for he was indicted by the Vestry for selling "a strong drink called Coffee which annoyed the neighbourhood by its evil smell."

Curiously enough, both houses, Groom's and the George and Vulture, now belong to the same proprietor, Mr. John Gardner, who, when he recently purchased the lease of the former, also acquired the original coffee-making recipe.

As a coffee-house the George and Vulture was a well-known resort of poets, wits, and satirists. The servants appear to have been very enterprising in attracting customers, for they would rush out and seize passers-by, crying : " Coffee, sir ; tea, sir ! Walk in and try a fresh pot ! "

At the George and Vulture, Swift discussed the South Sea Bubble with his friends. Here, too, came Richard Estcourt, of Drury Lane, and founded the first Beefsteak Club. At a later period this coffee-house, on account of its sign, was especially popular with patriotic clubs. Amongst its patrons were Addison and Steele, whilst Daniel Defoe seems also to have been a visitor.

In Georgian days the old coffee-house became one of the most popular resorts of John Wilkes, and there also went Hogarth and other well-known men of the day, whilst members of the Hell-Fire Club were constant though unwelcome visitors.

In later times Charles Dickens immortalized the George and Vulture by making it an abode of Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller; the old hostelry was also selected by the great novelist as being the place where subpoenas were served on Mr. Pickwick's friends in the famous case of Bardell and Pickwick. Dickens's affection for "the George" is now perpetuated by the City Pickwick, a social club which holds its meetings there.

Dickens is supposed to have obtained the idea for the name of Tom Pinch from Dr. Pinche's school, which in early Victorian days occupied the site of the Deutsche Bank, close to the George and Vulture, in George Yard. Sir Henry Irving was a pupil here, as was that still surviving legal luminary, Sir Edward Clarke.

Another resort full of old-world memories—the London Coffee-house, on Ludgate Hill, where John Leech's father and grandfather were proprietors—occupied a Roman site. In 1800, behind this house, in a bastion of the City Wall, was found a sepulchral monument, dedicated to a faithful wife by her husband, a Roman soldier. Here also were found a fragment of a statue of Hercules and a female head. In front of the coffee-house, immediately west of St. Martin's Church, stood Ludgate.

This coffee-house was within the rules of the Fleet Prison; and in the coffee-house were "locked up" for the night such juries from the Old Bailey Sessions as could not agree upon verdicts. In later days it became a tavern.

A curious incident once occurred in this house.

Mr. Broadhurst, the famous tenor, by singing a high note caused a wineglass on the table to break, the bowl being separated from the stem. Brayley, the topographer, was present at the time.

Lloyd's, now such a well-known institution, originated in a coffee-house of that name, which flourished as early as the very beginning of the eighteenth century.

Lloyd's Coffee-house was originally in Lombard Street, at the corner of Abchurch Lane, subsequently in Pope's-head Alley, where it was called "New Lloyd's Coffee-house"; but on February 14, 1774, it was removed to the north-west corner of the Royal Exchange, where it remained until the destruction of that building by fire. When the Royal Exchange was rebuilt, special rooms were set aside for Lloyd's, which assumed the form in which it flourishes to-day.

Lloyd's, as a place for insuring ships, was at first started by an astute individual who saw the possibilities of a meeting-place for underwriters and insurers of ships' cargoes.

As early as the year 1740, it is recorded that Mr. Baker, Master of Lloyd's Coffee-house, in Lombard Street, waited on Sir Robert Walpole with the news of Admiral Vernon's capture of Portobello. This was the first account received thereof, and, as it proved to be true, Sir Robert was pleased to order Mr. Baker a handsome present.

Another resort, somewhat similar to Lloyd's, was Garraway's Coffee-house—the first place where tea was sold in England. It was during the time of the South Sea Bubble that this became the scene

of great mercantile transactions. The original proprietor was Thomas Garway, tobacconist and coffee-man. He issued the following curious circular : “ Tea in England hath been sold in the leaf for six pounds, and sometimes for ten pounds the pound weight, and in respect of its former scarceness and dearness, it hath been only used as a regalia in high treatments and entertainments, and presents made thereof to princes and grandees till the year 1651. The said Thomas Garway did purchase a quantity thereof, and first publicly sold the said tea in leaf and drink, made according to the directions of the most knowing merchants and travellers into those eastern countries ; and upon knowledge and experience of the said Garway’s continued care and industry in obtaining the best tea, and making drink thereof, very many noblemen, physicians, merchants, and gentlemen of quality, have ever since sent to him for the said leaf, and daily resort to his house in Exchange Alley, aforesaid, to drink the drink thereof ; and to the end that all persons of eminence and quality, gentlemen and others, who have occasion for tea in leaf, may be supplied, these are to give notice that the said Thomas Garway hath tea to sell from ‘sixteen to fifty shillings per pound.’ ”

In 1673 there were some great sales of wine at Garraway’s. These took place “ by the candle ”—that is, by auction while an inch of candle burnt. In the *Tatler*, No. 147, we read : “ Upon my coming home last night, I found a very handsome present of French wine left for me, as a taste of 216 hogsheads, which are to be put to sale at £20 a hogshead,

at Garraway's Coffee-house, in Exchange Alley," etc. A sale by candle is not, however, by candle-light, but during the day. Such sales took place by daylight, and at the commencement of the sale, when the auctioneer had read a description of the property and the conditions on which it was to be disposed of, a piece of candle, usually an inch long, was lit, the last bidder at the time the light went out being declared the purchaser.

Garraway's was famous for its sandwiches and sherry, pale ale, and punch. The sandwich-maker, it was said, occupied two hours in cutting and arranging the sandwiches before the day's consumption commenced. The sale-room was on the first-floor, with a small rostrum for the seller, and a few rough wooden seats for the buyers. Sales of drugs, mahogany, and timber, were its speciality in the fifties of the last century, when twenty or thirty property and other sales sometimes took place in a day. The walls and windows of the lower room were covered with sale placards—unsentimental evidences of the mutability of human affairs.

In 1840 and 1841, when the tea speculation was at its height, and prices were fluctuating sixpence and eightpence per pound on the arrival of every mail, Garraway's was frequented every night by a host of the smaller fry of dealers, and there was much more excitement than ever occurred on 'Change when the most important intelligence arrived. Champagne flowed, and everyone ate and drank, and went, as he pleased, without the least question about the bill ; yet everything was paid, though such a state of affairs continued for several months.

At one time many taverns were the meeting-places of “mug-house clubs,” amusing resorts where gentlemen, lawyers, and tradesmen used to meet in a great room, seldom under a hundred in number.

Such assemblies usually had a president, who sat in an armchair some steps higher than the rest of the company, to keep the whole room in order. A harp played all the time at the lower end of the room ; and every now and then one or other of the company rose and entertained the rest with a song, some being good singers. Here nothing was drunk but ale, and every gentleman had his separate mug, which he chalked on the table where he sat, as it was brought in. A free - and - easy atmosphere pervaded the place, and everyone did and said exactly what he pleased.

A number of these “mug-house clubs” were to be found in Cheapside and its vicinity, and others about Covent Garden, a district which formerly abounded in well-known coffee-houses. In the eighteenth century, in Russell Street alone, were three of the most celebrated : Will’s, Button’s, and Tom’s. Will’s, as is well known, was closely connected with Dryden, the *Tatler*, and the *Spectator* ; and its wits’ room, on the first-floor, was celebrated throughout the town. So was Button’s, with its lion’s head letter-box, and the young poets in the back room. Tom’s, No. 17, on the north side of Russell Street, and of a somewhat later date, was taken down in 1865. The premises remained, with but little alteration, long after they ceased to be a coffee-house. It was named after its original proprietor, Thomas West, who, November 26, 1722,

threw himself, in a delirium, from the second-floor window into the street, and died immediately. The upper portion of the premises was the coffee-house, under which lived T. Lewis, the bookseller, Pope's publisher.

Will's Coffee-house, known as the Wits', which was very celebrated in its day, was at No. 23, Russell Street, Bow Street. Dryden first made it a resort of wits. The poet used to sit in a room on the first-floor, and his customary seat was by the fire-side in the winter, and at the corner of the balcony, looking over the street, in fine weather; he called the two places his winter and his summer seat. In the eighteenth century this room became the dining-room. In Dryden's day people did not sit in boxes, as subsequently, but at various tables which were dispersed through the room. Smoking was permitted in the public room, and was then much in vogue; indeed, it does not seem to have been considered a nuisance, as it was some years later. Here, as in other similar places of meeting, the visitors divided themselves into parties; the young beaux and wits, who seldom approached the principal table, thought it a great honour to have a pinch out of Dryden's snuff-box.

In later years Will's Coffee-house became an open market for libels and lampoons.

Swift thought little of the frequenters of Will's; he used to say the worst conversation he ever heard in his life was to be heard there. The wits (as they were called), said he disparagingly, used formerly to assemble at this house; that is to say, five or six men who had written plays or at least prologues,

or had a share in a miscellany, came thither, and entertained one another with their trifling compositions, assuming as grand an air as if they had been the noblest efforts of human nature, or as if the fate of kingdoms depended on them.

It was Swift who framed the rules of the Brothers' Club, which met every Thursday. "The end of our club," said he, "is to advance conversation and friendship, and to reward learning without interest or recommendation. We take in none but men of wit or men of interest; and if we go on as we began, no other club in this town will be worth talking of."

The Brothers', which was really a political club, broke up in 1713, and the next year Swift formed the celebrated Scriblerus Club, an association rather of a literary than a political character. Oxford and St. John, Swift, Arbuthnot, Pope, and Gay were members. Satire upon the abuse of human learning was their leading object. The name originated as follows: Oxford used playfully to call Swift *Martin*, and from this sprang *Martinus Scriblerus*. Swift, as is well known, is the name of one species of swallow (the largest and most powerful flier of the tribe), and martin is the name of another species, the wall-swallow, which constructs its nest in buildings.

The Scriblerus Club broke up owing to quarrels between Oxford and Bolingbroke. Swift tried the force of humorous expostulation in his fable of the "Fagot," where the Ministers are called upon to contribute their various badges of office to make the bundle strong and secure, but all was in vain. And at length, tired with this scene of murmuring

and discontent, quarrel, misunderstanding, and hatred, the Dean, who was almost the only mutual friend who laboured to compose these differences, made a final effort at reconciliation ; but his scheme entirely failed.

Button's Coffee-house was another resort of wits. Here, in the early part of the reign of Queen Anne, Swift first began to come, being known as "the mad parson." He knew no one ; no one knew him. He would lay his hat down on a table, and walk up and down at a brisk pace for half an hour without speaking to anyone, or seeming to pay attention to anything that was going forward. Then he would snatch up his hat, pay his money at the bar, and walk off without having opened his lips. At last he went one evening to a country gentleman, and very abruptly asked him : "Pray, sir, do you know any good weather in the world ?" After staring a little at the singularity of Swift's manner and the oddity of the question, the gentleman answered : "Yes, sir, I thank God I remember a great deal of good weather in my time." "That is more," replied Swift, "than I can say. I never remember any weather that was not too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry ; but, however God Almighty contrives it, at the end of the year 'tis all very well."

At Tom's Coffee-house in 1764 was formed a high-class club of about 700 members, paying each a guinea subscription. A card-room was on the first-floor.

The club flourished, so that in 1768, "having considerably enlarged itself of late," Thomas Haines,

the then proprietor, took in the front room of the next house westward as a coffee-room. The front room of No. 17 was then appropriated exclusively as a card-room for the subscription club, each member paying one guinea annually, the adjoining apartment being used as a conversation-room.

Tom Haines—Lord Chesterfield, as he was called, on account of his good manners—was succeeded by his son. The house ceased to be a coffee-house in 1814.

It would be interesting to know what has become of the old snuff-box—a most curious relic. It was a big tortoiseshell box, bearing on the lid, in high relief in silver, the portraits of Charles I and Queen Anne ; the Boscobel oak, with Charles II amid its branches ; and at the foot of the tree, on a silver plate, was inscribed “Thomas Haines.” At Will’s the small wits grew conceited if they dipped but into Mr. Dryden’s snuff-box, and at Tom’s the box probably received similar veneration.

The Bedford Coffee-house, in the north-west corner of the Piazza, was another celebrated Covent Garden resort.

Here in its palmy days, about 1754, Foote reigned supreme, his great rival being Garrick, who, however, usually got the worst of the verbal duels which constantly occurred. Garrick in early life had been in the wine trade, and had supplied the Bedford with wine ; he was thus described by Foote as living in Durham Yard, with three quarts of vinegar in the cellar, calling himself a wine-merchant.

Leaving the Bedford one night in company with Garrick, Foote dropped a guinea ; and not being

able to find it, exclaimed : “ Where on earth can it be gone to ? ” “ Gone to the devil, I think,” replied Garrick, who had assisted in the search. “ Well said, David ! ” was Foote’s reply. “ Let you alone for making a guinea go farther than anybody else.”

Tom King’s Coffee-house—a rough shed just beneath the portico of St. Paul’s Church—was a regular Covent Garden night-house. This haunt of night-birds is shown in the background of Hogarth’s print of “ Morning,” where the prim maiden lady, walking to church, is confronted by two fuddled beaux from King’s Coffee-house caressing two frail women. At the door a drunken brawl is proceeding, whilst swords and cudgels are being freely used.

The Piazza (known in the reign of Charles I as the “ Portico walke ”) in Covent Garden, the destruction of a portion of which, in 1858, was, from an artistic point of view, to be deplored, was erected between 1634 and 1640 by Inigo Jones, who also built St. Paul’s Church for Francis, Duke of Bedford. Though a more ambitious scheme was originally conceived, only the north and east sides were, however, built, and half of the latter was destroyed by fire about the middle of the eighteenth century.

Several distinguished artists lived in the Piazza, including Sir Peter Lely and Zoffany. Sir Godfrey Kneller came into the Piazza the year after Lely died, and the house he occupied was near the steps leading into Covent Garden Theatre. He had a garden at the back, reaching as far as Dr. Radcliffe’s, in Bow Street. Kneller was fond of flowers, and

had a fine collection. As he was intimate with Radcliffe, he permitted him to have a door into his garden ; but Radcliffe's servants gathering and destroying the flowers, Kneller sent him word he must shut up the door. Radcliffe replied peevishly : "Tell him he may do anything with it but paint it." "And I," answered Sir Godfrey, "can take anything from him but physic." Sir James Thornhill also lived in the same neighbourhood.

The Piazza Coffee-house, in Covent Garden, was a favourite resort of Sheridan's. Here it was that he sat during the burning of Drury Lane Theatre in 1809, calmly taking some refreshment, which excited the astonishment of a friend. "A man may surely be allowed to take a glass of wine by his own fireside," said Sheridan.

On the site of the Piazza Coffee-house was built the Floral Hall, in the Crystal Palace style of architecture, if the latter word be applicable to such a building. Henrietta Street, close by, was once well known for what seems to have been the first family hotel ever established in London, opened by David Low in 1774.

Gold, silver, and copper medals were struck and distributed by the landlord, as advertisements of his house—the gold to the Princes, silver to the nobility, and copper to the public generally. Mrs. Hudson succeeded him, and advertised her hotel "with stabling for one hundred noblemen and horses." The next proprietors were Richardson and Joy.

For years the hotel was famous for its dinner and coffee room—called the "Star," from the

number of men of rank who frequented it. One day the Duke of Norfolk entered the dining-room, and ordered of the waiter two lamb chops, at the same time inquiring : "John, have you a cucumber ?" The waiter replied in the negative—it was so early in the season ; but he would step into the market and inquire if there were any. The waiter did so, and returned with—"There are a few, but they are half a guinea apiece." "Half a guinea apiece ! Are they small or large ?" "Why, rather small." "Then buy two," was the reply.

Low had purchased the house from the executors of James West, President of the Royal Society, and it had originally been the mansion of Sir Kenelm Digby, who had his laboratory at the back. In course of time it was practically rebuilt by the Earl of Orford, better known as Admiral Russell, who in 1692 defeated Admiral de Tourville. The façade of the house originally resembled the forecastle of a ship, and the fine old staircase was formed of part of the vessel Admiral Russell commanded at La Hogue ; on it were handsomely carved anchors, ropes, and the coronet and initials of Lord Orford, who died there in 1727. The house was afterwards occupied by Thomas, Lord Archer, who had a well-stocked garden at the back. Mushrooms and cucumbers were his especial hobby.

In course of time Evans, of Covent Garden Theatre, removed here from the Cider Cellar in Maiden Lane, and, using the large dining-room for a singing-room, prospered until 1844, when he resigned the property to Mr. John Green, well known as Paddy Green, under whose rule the

excellence of the entertainment attracted so great an accession of visitors that there was built, in 1855, on the site of the old garden (Sir Kenelm Digby's), a handsome hall, to which the former singing-room formed a sort of vestibule. This was hung with portraits of celebrated actors and actresses collected by the proprietor.

The gallery was said to occupy part of the site of the cottage in which the Kembles occasionally resided during the zenith of their fame at Covent Garden Theatre. Kemble first saw the light there.

In the early seventies Evans's ceased to attract, and, after undergoing various vicissitudes and sheltering several clubs, the house finally became the headquarters of boxing, being now occupied by the National Sporting Club. The original staircase remains, and a number of prints recalling the palmy days of the prize-ring decorate the walls of the club-house.

Ninety years ago, it should be added, the prize-fighting fraternity had a club of their own, called the Daffy Club, which met at the Castle Tavern, Holborn, then kept by the famous boxers, Tom Belcher and Tom Spring. The walls of the long room in which it met were adorned by a number of sporting prints and portraits of famous pugilistic heroes, amongst them Belcher himself, Gentleman Jackson, Dutch Sam, Gregson, Humphreys, Mendoza, Cribb, Molyneux, Gulley, Randall, Turner, Martin, Harmer, Spring, Neat, Hickman, Painter, Scroggins, Tom Owen, and many others.

CHAPTER II

CURIOS CLUBS OF THE PAST—PRATT'S— BEEFSTEAK CLUBS, OLD AND NEW

MANY curiously-named clubs existed in the past. Addison, for instance, speaking of the clubs of his time, mentions several the names of which were probably merely humorous exaggerations. Names such as the Mum Club, the Ugly Club, can hardly be considered to have been in actual use.

Real clubs were the Lying Club, for which untruthfulness was supposed to be an indispensable qualification ; the Odd Fellows' Club ; the Humbugs (which met at the Blue Posts, in Covent Garden) ; the Samsonic Society ; the Society of Bucks ; the Purl Drinkers ; the Society of Pilgrims, held at the Woolpack, in the Kingsland Road ; the Thespian Club ; the Great Bottle Club ; the Aristocratic "Je ne sçai quoi" Club, held at the Star and Garter, in Pall Mall, of which the Prince of Wales and the Dukes of York, Clarence, Orleans, Norfolk, Bedford, and other notabilities, were members ; the Sons of the Thames Society ; the Blue Stocking Club ; the "No Pay No Liquor" Club, held at the Queen and Artichoke, in the Hampstead Road, and of which the ceremony, on a new member's introduction, was, after his paying a fee on entrance of one shilling, that he should wear a hat throughout

the first evening of his membership, made in the shape of a quart pot, and drink to the health of his brother members in a gilt goblet of ale. At Camden Town met the "Social Villagers," in a room at the Bedford Arms.

One of the first clubs was the October Club, composed of some hundred and fifty staunch Tories, chiefly country Members of Parliament. They met at the Bell, in King Street, Westminster—that street in which Spenser starved, and Dryden's brother kept a grocer's shop. A portrait of Queen Anne, by Dahl, hung in the club-room.

Another queer eighteenth - century institution was the Golden Fleece Club, the members of which assumed fancy names, such as Sir Timothy Addlebate, Sir Nimmy Sneer, Sir Talkative Doltle, Sir Skinny Fretwell, Sir Rumbus Rattle, Sir Boozy Prate-all, Sir Nicholas Ninny Sip-all, Sir Gregory Growler, Sir Pay-little, and the like. The main object of this club seems to have been a very free conviviality.

Perhaps the most eccentric club of all was "the Everlasting," which, like the modern Brook Club of New York, professed to go on for ever, its doors being kept open night and day throughout the year, whilst the members were divided into watches like sailors at sea.

The craze for queerly-named clubs lasted into the nineteenth century ; for instance, the King of Clubs was the fanciful name of a society founded about 1801 by Bobus Smith. At first it consisted of a small knot of lawyers, whose clients were too few, or too civil, to molest their after-dinner

recreations ; a few literary characters ; and a small number of visitors, generally introduced by those who took the chief part in conversation, and seemingly selected for the faculty of being good listeners.

The King of Clubs sat on the Saturday of each month in the Strand, at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, which at that time was a nest of boxes, each containing its club, and affording excellent cheer, though afterwards desecrated by indifferent dinners and very questionable wine. The object of the club was conversation. Everyone seemed anxious to bring his contribution of good sense or good humour, and the members discussed books and authors and the prevalent topics of the day, except politics, which were excluded.

Rogers, the banker poet, was a member of the King of Clubs. His funereal appearance gained him the nickname of the Dug-up Dandy, and all sorts of jokes were made concerning him. Once, when Rogers had been at Spa, and was telling Ward (afterwards Lord Dudley) that the place was so full that he could not so much as find a bed to lie in, and that he was obliged on that account to leave it, "Dear me," replied Ward, "was there no room in the churchyard?" At another time Murray was showing him a portrait of Rogers, observing that "it was done to the life." "To the death, you mean," replied Ward. Amongst other amusing sallies of the same kind was his asking Rogers : "Why don't you keep your hearse, Rogers ? You can well afford it."

A good example of what most of the little old-fashioned clubs of other days were like is furnished

by Pratt's, which, though not of very great antiquity, occupies curious old-world premises just off St. James's Street. This quaint and agreeable little club, still a flourishing institution, appears to have been founded about 1841; the old manuscript records of elections still exist. Though Pratt's has recently been reorganized, its distinctive features have not been impaired, and the house remains much in its original condition—the kitchen downstairs, with its old-fashioned open fire, quaint dresser filled with salmon-fly plates, old-world furniture and prints, forming a delightful relic of the past. A curious niche in this room would seem to have once served as a receptacle for cards or dice, in the days when the house was used for gambling, and raids by the authorities were common.

Next the kitchen is the dining-room, in which is a long table; the walls here are hung with old prints of the time when the club was founded. Both this room and the kitchen have very curious mantelpieces, the upper portions of which are formed of classical friezes which would seem to have been brought here from some old mansion. Throughout the quaint little building are cases of stuffed birds and fish, and the accessories and general appearance produce a singular effect not lacking in old-world charm.

Pratt's formerly opened only late in the evening, but its hours now admit of members lunching; indeed, whilst great care has been taken to preserve the original spirit of the club, many modern improvements unobtrusively carried out make it a most comfortable resort, whilst the convenience of

members has been studied by the addition of four bedrooms.

By far the most interesting of the old dining clubs was the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks, founded about 1735 by Rich, the famous harlequin and machinist of Covent Garden Theatre. At first it consisted of twenty-four members, but the number was afterwards increased. Hogarth, Wilkes, and many other celebrated men, were members of this society, which had many curious customs.

Its officials consisted of a President of the Day, Vice-President, Bishop, Recorder, and Boots.

The meetings were originally held in a room at Covent Garden Theatre.

The President took his seat after dinner throughout the season, according to the order in which his name appeared on "the rota."

He was invested with the badge of the society by the Boots. His duty was to give the chartered toasts in strict accordance with the list before him ; to propose all resolutions that had been duly made and seconded ; to observe all the ancient forms and customs of the society ; and to enforce them on others. He had no sort of power inherent in his position ; on the contrary, he was closely watched and sharply pulled up if he betrayed either ignorance or forgetfulness on the smallest matter of routine connected with his office. In fact, he was a target for all to shoot at.

A Beefeater's hat and plume hung on the right-hand side of the chair behind him, and a three-cornered hat (erroneously believed to have belonged to Garrick) on the left. When putting a resolution,

the President was bound to place the plumed hat on his head and instantly remove it. If he failed in one or the other act, he was equally reminded by being called to order in no silent terms. The most important obligation imposed on him was the necessity of singing, whether he could sing or not, the song of the day.

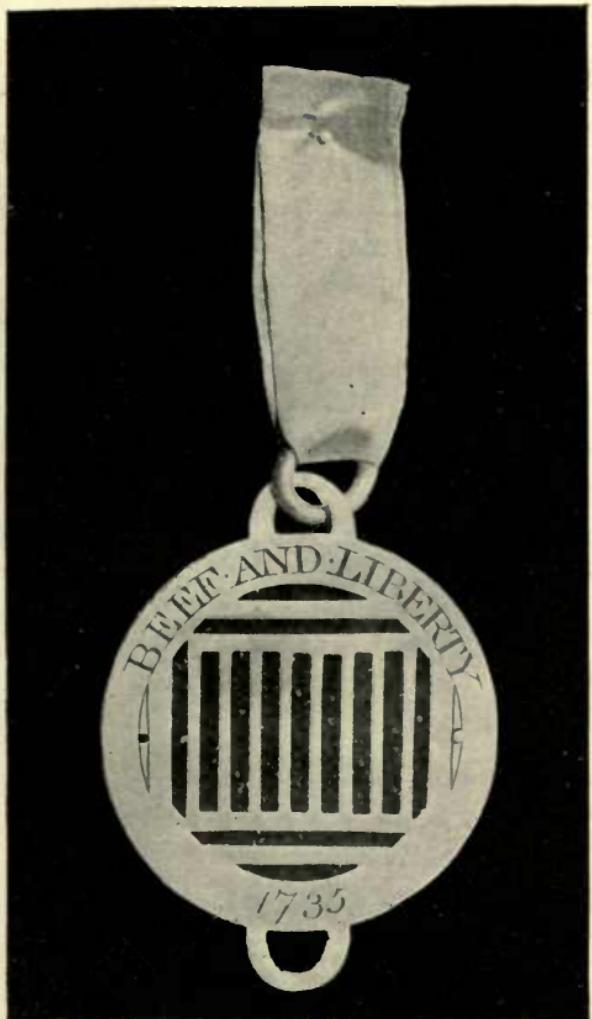
The Vice was the oldest member of the society present, and had to carry out the President's directions without responsibility.

The Bishop sang the grace and the anthem.

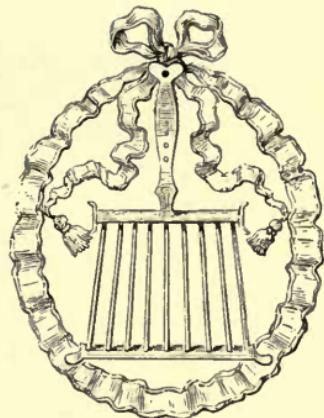
The most important official of all was the Recorder. He had to rebuke everybody for offences, real or imaginary, and with him lay the duty of delivering "the charge" to each newly elected member, which was a burlesque function.

The Boots was the last elected of the members, and there was a grave responsibility attached to his office. He was the fag of the brotherhood, and had to arrive before the dinner-hour, not only to decant the wine, but to fetch it from the cellar. This latter custom was persevered in until the destruction of the old Lyceum by fire, and was only then abandoned by reason of the inaccessibility of the cellar, when the society returned to the new theatre, the rebuilt Lyceum, in 1838. No one was exempted from this ordeal, and woe to him who shirked or neglected it. The greatest enjoyment seemed to be afforded, both to members and guests, by summoning Boots to decant a fresh bottle of port at the moment when a hot plate and a fresh steak were placed before him.

The Duke of Sussex was Boots from the date of



ORIGINAL BADGE OF THE SUBLIME SOCIETY.



LATER BADGE.



RING.



BADGE OF THE AD LIBITUM CLUB.



REVERSE OF AD LIBITUM BADGE.

his election (April, 1808) to April, 1809, when a vacancy occurred, and Mr. Arnold senior was elected, releasing His Royal Highness from the post. Indeed, until the society ceased to exist, the Duke of Leinster, who had duly served his apprenticeship (although he drank nothing stronger than water himself), constantly usurped the legitimate duties of the Boots by arriving before him and performing the accustomed, but not forgotten, services of the day.

When any Boots showed signs of temper, or any member was unruly or infringed the rules of the society, a punishment was in store for him. It was moved and seconded that such delinquent should be put in the white sheet and reprimanded by the Recorder; and if the "Ayes had it" (and they always did have it), the sentence was carried out.

The offending party was taken from the room by two members bearing halberds, preceded by a third carrying the sword, and was brought back again in the garb of penitence (the tablecloth). Then, after a lecture from the Recorder, severe or humorous according to the nature of his offence, he was allowed to resume his place at the table.

It happened that Brother the Duke of Sussex was put in the white sheet under the following circumstances: His Royal Highness had come to the "Steaks" with Brother Hallett, and on the road the watch-chain belonging to the latter had been cut and his bunch of seals stolen. The cloth removed, Hallett addressed the President, recounted the loss he had sustained, and charged the Duke as the perpetrator of the robbery. The case was tried

on the spot ; and the evidence having clearly established the criminality of the accused (to a Beefsteak jury), it was moved and resolved that His Royal Highness should forthwith be put into the white sheet and reprimanded for an act which might have been considered a fault had the victim been a stranger, but which became a crime when that victim was a Brother. There was no appeal. His Royal Highness reluctantly rose, was taken out in custody, brought before the Recorder (Brother Richards), and received a witty but unsparing admonition for the offence of which he had been unanimously found guilty. For a wonder, His Royal Highness took it ill. He resumed his seat, but remained silent and reserved. No wit could make him smile, no bantering could rouse him, and at an unusually early hour he ordered his carriage and went away.

The next day Mr. Arnold, who had been the mover of the resolution, went to the palace to smooth the ruffled plumes of his royal confrère, and took his son with him. In those days the Duke rode on horseback, and as they turned out of the gate leading from the gardens to the portico his horse was at the door and His Royal Highness in the act of coming out. By the time they neared the entrance his foot was in the stirrup, and he saw them approaching. Without a moment's hesitation he withdrew his foot, released the bridle, and, with both his enormous hands extended, advanced three or four steps to meet Mr. Arnold.

“I know what you’ve come about,” he called loudly out in his accustomed note (probably B flat),

and wringing both Mr. Arnold's hands until he winced with pain—"I know what you've come about! I made a fool of myself last night. You were quite right, and I quite wrong, so I shall come next Saturday and do penance again for my bad temper."

Sometimes a member turned sulky when made to do penance. On one occasion an individual of a touchy disposition was put into the white sheet and brought before the President, who admonished him as a parent would a child—a Beefsteak sermon without its usual bathos. The recipient listened to the harangue without moving a muscle of his face. The lecture done, he resumed his seat, but at the next meeting sent in his resignation.

Saturday was the day on which the dinners were held. Each member was allowed to bring one visitor. If he brought a second, he had to borrow a name; in default of obtaining it, the visitor was doomed to retire.

Visitors, unlike members, were not subjected to any humorous penalties, but were most ceremoniously treated. They were never unduly urged to drink more than might be agreeable to them; one bumper in the evening was alone imperative, but it might be drunk in water. They were never pressed, though always asked, to sing. A "suggestion" to sing was the adopted word.

The only call to which it was imperative for the visitor to respond was "a toast." If he hesitated too long, he was, perhaps abruptly, told he might give anything the world produced—man, woman, or child, or any sentiment, social or otherwise. Some-

times it happened that such prompting was in vain, and the confused guest would nine times out of ten propose the only toast he was prohibited from giving—"The prosperity of the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks."

Members were responsible for their guests, who were made to understand that whatever passed within the walls of the S.S.B.S. was sacred. William Jerdan, Editor of the *Literary Gazette*, was a visitor, and at a late hour he was observed to take a note of a brilliant repartee that had been made.

The President, by whose side he sat, pointed to the motto over the chimney-piece :

“ Ne fidos inter amicos
Sit qui dicta foras eliminet.”*

“ Jerdan,” he said, “ you understand those words?”

“ I understand one,” said Jerdan, looking sharply round—“ sit ; and I mean to do it.”

Authors, and dramatic authors in particular, were mercilessly chaffed when they dined with the Sublime Society. Cobb, whose farce “The First-Floor” achieved great popularity, used to accept the satire and raillery of members with great good-humour, generally silencing them one by one. Storace composed some of his finest music for Cobb’s comic operas, “The Haunted Tower” and “The Siege of Belgrade,” which achieved success. An Indian opera, “Ramah Drûg,” did not. Cobb was much chaffed about these operas, especially about the first-named.

“ Why ever,” one night said Arnold, “ did you

* Let none beyond this threshold bear away
What friend to friend in confidence may say.

call your opera by such a name? There was no spirit in it from beginning to end!" "Anyhow," exclaimed another inveterate punster, 'Ramah Drûg' was the most appropriate title possible, for it was literally ramming a drug down the public throat." "True," rejoined Cobb; "but it was a drug that evinced considerable power, for it operated on the public twenty nights in succession." "My good friend," said Arnold triumphantly, "that was a proof of its weakness, if it took so long in working." "You are right, Arnold, in that respect," retorted Cobb. "Your play" (Arnold had brought out a play, which did not survive the first night) "had the advantage of mine, for it was so powerful a drug as to be thrown up as soon as it was taken!"

The first and last Saturdays of the season, and the Saturday in Easter week, were "private."

On these days no visitors were invited. The accounts were gone into, and the amount of the "whip" to regulate the past or accruing expenses decided, the qualifications of such candidates as were anxious, on the occasion of a vacancy, to join the society discussed, and other matters connected with its well-being debated.

Each member paid 5s. for his dinner, and 10s. 6d. for his guest. The entrance fee was £26 5s. until 1849, when it was reduced to £10 10s., and there were generally two annual whips of £5 each.

After the destruction of Covent Garden Theatre, where it had met for seventy years, the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks migrated to the Bedford Coffee-house, where it remained till the building of the Lyceum Theatre in 1809, in a special room

of which it took up its abode till 1830, when the Lyceum also was burnt down.

After this it adjourned to the Lyceum Tavern, in the Strand, and thence returned to the Bedford Coffee-house, where it remained until 1838, when a suite of rooms was built for it under the new roof of the Lyceum. The original gridiron, dug out of the ruins of Covent Garden and the Lyceum, formed the centre ornament of the dining-room ceiling. The entire room and ceiling were in Gothic architecture, and the walls were hung with paintings and engravings of past and present members, the former the work of Brother Lonsdale. Folding-doors, the entire width of the room, connected it with an anteroom. When the doors were opened on the announcement of dinner, an enormous grating in the form of a gridiron, through which the fire was seen and the steaks handed, afforded members a view of the kitchen.

There was no blackballing, but every would-be member had to be invited at least twice as a guest, in order that his qualifications might be ascertained, and then, if he were put up, he was certain to be elected. As a matter of fact, the formality of a ballot was gone through, though there were no rejections.

When a new member was initiated, he and the visitors were requested after dinner to withdraw to an anteroom, where port and punch were provided for them.

The newly elected member was then brought in blindfolded, accompanied on his right by the Bishop with his mitre on, and holding the volume in which the oath of allegiance to the rules of the society

was inscribed, while on his left stood some other member holding the sword of state. Behind were the halberdiers. These were all decked out in the most incongruous and absurd dresses—in all probability originally obtained from Covent Garden Theatre.

“The charge” was then delivered by the Recorder. In it he dwelt on the solemnity of the obligations the new member was about to take on himself. He was made to understand, in tones alternately serious and gay, the true brotherly spirit of the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks ; that while a perfect equality existed among the Brethren, such equality never should be permitted to degenerate into undue familiarity ; that while badinage was encouraged in the freest sense of the word, such badinage must never approach to a personality ; and that good fellowship must be united with good breeding. Above all, attention was drawn to the Horatian motto over the chimney-piece, and the aspirant was warned that ignominious expulsion was the fate of him who carried beyond those walls words uttered there in friendship’s confidence.

That done, the following oath, dating from the origin of the society, was administered :

O A T H.

YOU SHALL ATTEND DULY,

VOTE IMPARTIALLY,

AND CONFORM TO OUR LAWS AND ORDERS OBEDIENTLY.

YOU SHALL SUPPORT OUR DIGNITY,

PROMOTE OUR WELFARE, AND AT ALL TIMES
BEHAVE AS A WORTHY MEMBER IN THIS SUBLIME SOCIETY.

SO BEEF AND LIBERTY BE YOUR REWARD.

This was read aloud, clause by clause, by the Bishop, and repeated by the candidate ; at the end the book was rapidly exchanged by the cook, who was called the Serjeant, for the bone of beef that had served for the day's dinner, carefully protected by a napkin, and after the words

“ SO BEEF AND LIBERTY BE MY REWARD ”

he was desired to kiss the book. Instead of this he kissed its substitute, and by reason of a friendly downward pressure from behind he generally did so most devoutly.

The bandage was then removed from his eyes ; the book on which he had sworn the oath was still before him ; and amid the laughter and congratulations of his Brethren he again took his seat as a member of the Sublime Society, and the excluded guests were readmitted.

The Serjeant was a very important figure at the meetings of the Sublime Society, and the office was well filled by Heardson, the cook, whose picture was engraved by J. R. Smith (the print hangs in the modern Beefsteak). So great was his affection for the “ Society ” that one of his last requests was to be carried into the club-room to take a farewell glance at the familiar scene, and this he was allowed to do.

A great supporter of the Beefsteak Society was the old Duke of Norfolk, and when he dined there he would be ceremoniously ushered to the chair after dinner, and invested with an orange-coloured ribbon, to which a silver medal, in the form of a gridiron, was suspended. In the chair he comported himself with great urbanity and good-humour.

Above all things, this Duke of Norfolk loved long sittings, during which he would consume prodigious quantities of wine, which seemed to affect him but very little. Occasionally, however, towards the close of the evening, the Duke, without exhibiting any symptom of inebriety, became immovable in his chair, as if deprived of all muscular volition. When at his own house he had an especial method of obviating the inconveniences of such a state, and would ask someone to ring the bell three times. This was the signal for bringing in a kind of easy litter, consisting of four equidistant belts, fastened together by a transverse one, which four domestics placed under him, and thus removed his enormous bulk, with a gentle swinging motion, up to his apartment. Upon these occasions the Duke would say nothing, but the whole thing was managed with great system and in perfect silence.

Another prominent member was Charles Morris, who greatly enlivened the dinners by his wit, high spirits, and singing. When he was in town nothing kept him away, even when he was nearly eighty years of age.

"Die when you will, Charles," said Curran, "you'll die in your youth." And his words were verified, for his spirits remained unquenched till within a few days of his death. Morris wrote many songs which he would sing himself. The following is a specimen of his talents in that direction :

" Let them rail who think fit, at my ways or my wit ;
 I reply to the foes of good living :
 ' Heaven bade me be gay—to enjoy's to obey,
 And mirth is my prayer of thanksgiving.'

When the crabbed with spleen would o'ershadow life's scene,
 I light up a spark to dispel it;
 And if snarlers exclaim, 'What's this laughing fool's name?
 Next verse of my ballad will tell it.

"I'm a brat of old Horace—the song-scribbling Morris,
 More noted for rhyme than for reason;
 One who roars and carouses, makes noise in all houses,
 And takes all good things in their season.
 To this classic of joy, I became when a boy
 A pupil most ardent and willing;
 And through life as a man, I've stuck fast to this plan,
 And passed it in flirting and filling."

In his eighty-sixth year Morris bade adieu to the Sublime Society in verse, but four years later, in 1835, he revisited it, and the members then presented him with a large silver bowl, appropriately inscribed, as a testimonial of their affectionate esteem.

As was his habit, Morris did not fail to allude to the gift in verse :

"When my spirits are low, for relief and delight,
 I still place your splendid Memorial in sight;
 And call to my Muse, when care strives to pursue,
 'Bring the Steaks to my Mem'ry, the Bowl to my view.'"

The bowl in question eventually passed into the hands of the present Beefsteak Club; most unfortunately, it was some years ago taken away by thieves, who managed to obtain access to the club premises, and it has never been recovered.

Charles Morris had very slender means to support his family, but owing to the generosity of the old Duke of Norfolk he was able to retire to a charming rural retreat near Dorking, embosomed amidst the undulating elevations of Surrey. Here, however,

he seems not to have been entirely at ease, regretting no doubt the sweet, shady side of Pall Mall, of which he had so gracefully sung.

The Duke assisted Morris, owing, it was said, to the kindly suggestion of Kemble, the actor, who one night had been dining at Norfolk House when the Beefsteak bard had also formed one of the party. When the latter had gone, a few guests only remaining with the Duke, who liked late sittings, His Grace began to deplore, somewhat pathetically, the smallness of the stipend upon which poor Charles was obliged to support his family, observing that it was a discredit to the age that a man who had so long gladdened the lives of so many titled and opulent associates should be left to struggle with the difficulties of an inadequate income at a time of life when he had no reasonable hope of augmenting it. Kemble, who had been listening attentively, then broke out in peculiarly emphatic tones : “ And does your Grace sincerely lament the destitute condition of your friend, with whom you have passed so many agreeable hours ? Your Grace has described that condition most feelingly. But is it possible that the greatest peer of the realm, luxuriating amidst the prodigalities of fortune, should lament the distress which he does not relieve ? The empty phrase of benevolence, the mere breath and vapour of generous sentiment, become no man ; they certainly are unworthy of your Grace. Providence, my Lord Duke, has placed you in a station where the wish to do good and the doing it are the same thing. An annuity from your overflowing coffers, or a small nook of

land clipped from your unbounded domains, would scarcely be felt by your Grace ; but you would be repaid with usury, with tears of grateful joy, with prayers warm from a bosom which your bounty will have rendered happy."

The Duke said nothing at the time, except stare with astonishment at so unexpected a lecture ; but not a month elapsed before Charles Morris was snugly invested in a beautiful sequestered retreat surrounded by pretty grounds.

Captain Morris lived to the age of ninety-two, dying in July, 1838. He lies in Betchworth Churchyard, near the east end ; his grave is simply marked by a head- and foot-stone, with an inscription of three or four lines ; he who had sung the praises of so many choice spirits has not here a stanza to his own memory.

As time went on, the old customs and toasts of the Sublime Society became out of date, and, though certain modifications were attempted, it ceased to exist in 1869, when its effects were sold. The following is a list of the most important of them.

An oak dining-table with President's cap, a mitre and a gridiron carved in three separate circular compartments at the top. This relic of past conviviality is now at White's Club, having been purchased by the Hon. Algernon Bourke some years ago.

A carved oak President's chair—now, I believe, at Sandringham—and a number of members' chairs copied in oak from the Glastonbury Chair, the backs carved with the gridiron and the arms and initials of each member. A few of these chairs belong to a firm of brewers.

Forty - seven engraved portraits of members, glazed in oak frames, on which were metal grid-irons. One or two of these are in the possession of the present Beefsteak Club.

Other *objets d'art* and curiosities were—

The ribbon and badge of the President in the form of a silver gridiron, dated 1735.

Two brown stoneware jugs, with silver lids and mounts, the thumb-pieces gridirons.

A fine *couteau de chasse*, with engraved and pierced blade, the handle formed of a group of Mars, Venus, and Cupid, in silver, the mounting of the sheath of open-work silver, chased with arabesque figures, scrolls, and flowers. The reputed work of Benvenuto Cellini ; inscribed “Ex Dono Antonio Askew, M.D.”

An oval ivory snuff-box, with a cameo of Dante on the lid and inscription inside : “ Presented to the S.S.B.S. by B. G. B. [Dr. Babington], an honorary member. The cameo of Dante on the lid of this box was carved by its donor, and its wood formed part of a mummy-case brought by him from Egypt in 1815 ; the surrounding ivory was turned by a friend ”—in a leather case.

A circular snuff-box, formed of oak dug from the ruins of the old Lyceum Theatre, after its destruction by fire ; a silver shield engraved with the gridiron on the lid.

A wooden punch-ladle, with open-work handle, and ten doilys.

A cigar-case, formed of a curious piece of oak.

A pair of halberds.

A large Oriental punch-bowl, enamelled with

figures, butterflies, and flowers, inside and out, in a case. Presented by Lord Saltoun, K.G.

Another enamelled with figures and baskets of flowers in medallions, with red and gold scale borders. Presented by Baron Heath.

A ditto, enamelled with figures.

A fluted ditto, with flowers.

The President's hat, a hat said to have belonged to Garrick, and a Cardinal's hat.

The mitre of the late Cardinal Gregorio, presented to the Sublime Society of the Beefsteaks by Brother W. Somerville, in silk case.

Facsimile of an agreement between Rich and C. Fleetwood, framed and glazed.

Bust of John Wilkes, in marble.

There was in addition to this a certain amount of plate, including cases of silver forks, engraved with members' names. One of these cases now belongs to the Beefsteak Club.

At one time the members wore a uniform consisting of a blue coat and buff waistcoat, with brass buttons impressed with the gridiron and motto, 'Beef and Liberty.'

They also wore rings bearing the same devices. One of these rings, presented within recent years by a member, is in the Beefsteak Club, which also possesses a number of badges and other relics connected with the Sublime Society and with the Ad Libitum Club, a kindred organization, of which Heardson also appears to have been the cook.

The device of the Ad Libitum was more ornate and graceful than that of the Sublime Society, with

which it seems to have been closely connected, though membership of the one did not necessarily imply membership of the other. As far as can be ascertained, no records of the *Ad Libitum* have been preserved.

The present Beefsteak Club—less convivial in its ways than the Sublime Society—was founded about 1876, and its original dining-place was a room in the building known till its demolition, some years ago, as Toole's Theatre. When this was pulled down, it migrated to premises specially built for it in Green Street, Leicester Square. The membership is small, and consists mostly of men well known in the political, theatrical, and literary worlds. Opening only in the afternoon, it is used chiefly as a place for dining and supping amidst congenial and pleasant conversation.

The club consists of one long room, which has a high-pitched roof in the design of which gridirons are cleverly interposed. Here are hung a quantity of old prints, the majority of them after Hogarth. A number of etchings by Whistler (who was a member) are also to be seen. The Beefsteak owns a good deal of silver, much of which has been presented from time to time by members; the practice of giving plate being a usage of the club. The most valuable possession is a tankard of solid gold, on which are inscribed the names of those members who took part in the Boer War. This was purchased by subscription amongst the members. The example of the Sublime Society is followed in respect of there being one long

table in the place of the separate small ones in use at other clubs.

There formerly existed a number of curious dining societies and clubs in the provinces, and some of these still survive, amongst the number of which is the Chelmsford Beefsteak Club, established in 1768. There does not appear to be any book older than 1781, but in the middle of a book which commences in 1829 is written a list of the members from February 5, 1768, to October 18, 1850 ; and as the whole is in the same handwriting, it is clear the earlier lists of members must have been copied from an older book, which has now disappeared.

The oldest book in the possession of the club is one for entering the attendances of members, and commences October 12, 1781. At that time the members appear to have dined together weekly.

At the monthly dinners of the club, the chairman proposes the following toasts :

- (a) "Church and Queen."
- (b) "The Prince of Wales and the Rest of the Royal Family."
- (c) "Our Absent Members."
- (d) "Our Visitors, if any."

No one is allowed to stand when proposing or replying to a toast.

Morning dress is worn at dinner.

One of the last of the old school of members of this club was Admiral Johnson, elected 1842, who was the midshipman who supported Nelson's head as he lay dying in the cockpit of the *Victory*. It was no uncommon thing for the Admiral to have

three bottles of port put before him at 8 o'clock, which he consumed by about 9.30. He was always called upon for a song, and he used to sing about fourteen verses of "On board the *Arethusa*." His usual hour for retirement was about 10.30, when he would be escorted to his pony, and would ride home to Baddow, three miles away. Admiral Johnson remembered the time when the fine for any member being unfortunate enough to be presented with twins by his wife was the presentation of a pair of buckskin breeches to each member of the club, and he boasted of still possessing a pair that Thomas W. Bramston, whilst member for the county, had to pay him.

At many old county dining clubs penalties of this sort were enforced: members were fined for marrying, for becoming a father, or for moving to another house; and such fines usually consisted of a certain number of bottles of wine. Other quaint usages included the forfeiture of some small sum for refusing to take the chair at dinner or for leaving it to ring the bell, for allowing a stranger to pay for anything consumed, and similar delinquencies.

Another Beefsteak Club was that at Cambridge, the members of which belonged to the University. This club, now for some years in abeyance, was a quaint survival from the past, and exactly reproduced the dinner of eighteenth-century sportsmen. Twenty-five years ago, when it still flourished, it usually consisted of but four or five members, but guests could be invited. The dining costume was a blue cutaway coat with brass buttons, and buff

waistcoat, the tie being secured with a bull's head. The dinner was entirely composed of various dishes of beef, beer only being drunk; some curious old songs were sung, and the toasts, regulated by inflexible precedent, were drunk in port from glasses of a size regulated by immemorial custom. Amongst these toasts was the health of the late Mr. Bowes, who, when he was an undergraduate at Cambridge, won the Derby with Mundig. This horse, after a tremendous struggle, beat Ascot, belonging to the present writer's grandfather, by half a neck.

The dinners used to be held at the Red Lion Inn, the head-waiter of which hostelry, Dunn by name, was supposed to be the only individual alive accurately acquainted with the exact rules and traditions of the club. The proceedings were enlivened by music played on a fiddle by a well-known Cambridge character, White-headed Bob.

The Cambridge Beefsteak Club possessed a good deal of plate, valued at about £1,500. It had also an income of some £200 a year, arising from sums of money left to it by former members.

A somewhat similar Cambridge dining club was the True Blue, which also had few members. They met several times in a term, wearing eighteenth-century dress and white wigs; as a matter of fact, the cost of this costume often deterred men from joining, as did the rule that a new member should drink off a bottle of claret at a draught. This unpleasant custom, which might well have been modified, seems to have killed the club, for I fancy that, like the Cambridge Beefsteak, it has not met for many years.

A remarkable little provincial club which flourished at Norwich at the beginning of the nineteenth century was the Hole-in-the-Wall Club, where a number of clever men used to meet. One of the principal figures here was Dr. Frank Sayers, a poet of no mean inspiration, a sound antiquary, an elegant scholar, and an accomplished gentleman. His accustomed chair was kept for him every Monday, and it would have been a profanation had any other occupant filled it. He was a man of admirable wit, and the characters around him, which no skill of selection could have got together in any other club or in any other town, afforded unfailing objects of his innocent and unwounding pleasantry.

Amongst other eccentric frequenters of the Hole-in-the-Wall was Ozias Lindley, a Minor Canon of the cathedral, and Sheridan's brother-in-law. He was subject, beyond anyone living, to fits of absent-mindedness. He out - Parson - Adamized Parson Adams. One Sunday morning, as he was riding through the Close, on his way to serve his curacy, his horse threw off a shoe. A lady whom he had just passed, having remarked it, called out to him : "Sir, your horse has just cast one of his shoes." "Thank you, madam," returned Ozias ; "will you, then, be kind enough to put it on ?" In preaching, he often turned over two or three pages at once of his sermon ; and when a universal titter and stare convinced him of the transition, he observed coolly, "I find I have omitted a considerable part of my sermon, but it is not worth going back for," and then went on to the end.

Hudson Gurney, at one time M.P. for Newport, Isle of Wight, was also a frequenter of the snug club-room of the Hole-in-the-Wall, and used to bask in the sunshine of Sayers's festive conversation. His own heart, too, at that time beat high with frolic and hilarity. Hudson's was, from his earliest prime, a clear, distinguishing intellect. He was a well-read man, and his poetry, no fragment of which is in print, except his admirable translation of the *Cupid and Psyche* of Apuleius into English verse, was by no means of a secondary kind.

At this club William Taylor smoked his evening pipe, and lost himself in the cloudier fumes of German metaphysics and German philology. Taylor's translation of Bürger's "*Leonore*," though apparently now forgotten, was said to be better than the original. While his erudition was unlimited, however, it was principally concerned with books that were not readable by others. His most amusing quality (and it was that which kept an undying grin upon the laughter-loving face of Sayers) was his everlasting love of hypothesis, and it was impossible to withstand the imperturbable gravity with which he put forth his wild German paradoxes. He proved, to the thorough dissatisfaction of those who knew not how to confute him, and to the unspeakable amusement of those who thought it not worth their while—and that, too, by a chemical analysis of colours, and the processes by which animal heat and organic structure affect them—that the first race of mankind was green! Green, he said, was the primal colour of vegetable existence—the first raiment in which Nature leaped

into existence ; the colour on which the eye loved to repose ; and, in the primeval state, the first quality that attracted man to man, and bound him up in the circles of those tender charities and affinities which kept the early societies of the race together.

At one time Edinburgh was celebrated for its quaint clubs, one of which was the Soaping Club, the motto of which was, that “Every man should soap his own beard”—that is, “indulge his own humour.” The Lawn-market Club was an association of dram-drinking, gossiping citizens, who met every morning early, and, after proceeding to the post-office to pick up letters and news, adjourned to the public-house to talk and drink. The Edinburgh, a “Viscera” club, flourished till quite a late date ; the members of this were pledged to dine off food from the entrails of animals, such as kidneys, liver, and tripe. This club seems to have rather resembled the more modern Haggis Club.

There were at one time a number of parochial clubs in London. That of the parish of St. Margaret’s, Westminster, which still exists, and which consists of “Past Overseers,” possesses a unique heirloom, which is at the same time an important chronological record of public events.

In 1713 a small fourpenny tobacco-box, bought at Horn Fair, Charlton, Kent, was presented by Mr. Monck, a member of the Society of Past Overseers, to his colleagues.

Seven years later, in 1720, the donor was commemorated by the addition of a silver lid to the box. In 1726 a silver side case and bottom were

added. In 1740 an embossed border was placed upon the lid, and the under-part enriched with an emblem of Charity. In 1746 Hogarth engraved inside the lid a bust of the Duke of Cumberland, with allegorical figures and scroll commemorating the Battle of Culloden. In 1765 an interwoven scroll was added to the lid, enclosing a plate with the arms of the City of Westminster, and inscribed : "This Box to be delivered to every succeeding set of Overseers, on penalty of five guineas."

The original Horn box being thus ornamented, additional ornamentation in the shape of cases continued to be provided by the senior overseers for the time being. These were embellished with silver plates engraved with emblematical and historical subjects and busts. Among the first are a view of the fireworks in St. James's Park to celebrate the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1749 ; Admiral Keppel's action off Ushant, and his acquittal after a court-martial ; the Battle of the Nile ; the repulse of Admiral Linois, 1804 ; the Battle of Trafalgar, 1805 ; the action between the *San Fiorenzo* and *La Piémontaise*, 1808 ; the Battle of Waterloo, 1815 ; the bombardment of Algiers, 1816 ; view of the House of Lords at the trial of Queen Caroline ; the Coronation of George IV ; and his visit to Scotland, 1822.

Features of great interest are : Portraits of John Wilkes, churchwarden in 1759 ; Nelson, Duncan, Howe, Vincent ; Fox and Pitt, 1806 ; George IV as Prince Regent, 1811 ; the Princess Charlotte, 1817 ; and Queen Charlotte, 1818.

In 1813 a large silver plate was added to the outer

case, with a portrait of the Duke of Wellington, commemorating the centenary of the agglomeration of the box. Local occurrences are also commemorated : The interior of Westminster Hall, with the Westminster Volunteers attending Divine service at the drumhead on the Fast Day, 1803 ; the Old Sessions House ; a view of St. Margaret's from the north-east ; the west front tower ; and the altar-piece. On the outside of the first case is a clever engraving of a cripple. The top of the second case represents the Governors of the Poor in their board-room. It bears this inscription : "The original Box and cases to be given to every succeeding set of Overseers, on penalty of fifty guineas, 1783."

In 1785 Mr. Gilbert exhibited the box to some friends after dinner. That night thieves broke into his house, and carried off all the plate that had been in use ; but the box had been removed beforehand to a bedchamber.

In 1793 Mr. Read, a Past Overseer, detained the box because his accounts were not passed. An action was brought for its recovery, which was long delayed, owing to two members of the society giving Read a release, which he successfully pleaded as a bar to the action. This rendered it necessary to take proceedings in equity, and a bill was filed in Chancery against all three, Read being compelled to deposit the box with Master Leeds until the end of the suit. Three years of litigation ensued. Eventually the Chancellor directed the box to be restored to the Overseers' Society, and Mr. Read paid in costs £300. The extra costs amounted to £76 13s. 11d., owing to the illegal proceedings of

Mr. Read. The sum of £91 7s. was at once raised, and the surplus spent upon a third case of octagon shape. The top records the triumph: Justice trampling upon a prostrate man, from whose face a mask falls upon a writhing serpent. A second plate, on the outside of the fly-lid, represents the Lord Chancellor Loughborough pronouncing his decree for the restoration of the box, March 5, 1796.

On the fourth case is shown the anniversary meeting of the Past Overseers' Society, with the churchwardens giving the charge previous to delivering the box to the succeeding overseer. He, on his side, is bound to produce it at certain parochial entertainments, with at least three pipes of tobacco, under the penalty of six bottles of claret, and to return the whole, with some addition, safe and sound, under a penalty of 200 guineas.

In more recent days additions to this box, forming records of various important public events, have from time to time been added. A tobacco-stopper of mother-of-pearl, with a silver chain, is enclosed within the box, and completes this unique memorial.

CHAPTER III

CLUBS OF ST. JAMES'S STREET—BOODLE'S, ARTHUR'S, AND WHITE'S

THE original clubland of the West End was St. James's Street, where the first clubs originated from coffee-houses. In this historic thoroughfare—the “dear old Street of Clubs and Cribs,” as Frederick Locker called it—most of the sociable institutions founded many decades ago still flourish.

Such are White's, Arthur's, Brooks's, the Cocoa-tree, and Boodle's, the latter of which, after passing through a crisis which came near closing its doors for ever, now once again flourishes as of yore.

This club-house was built about 1765 by John Crunden, from the designs of Adam, but between 1821 and 1824 certain alterations and additions were carried out from the designs of John Papworth, an architect of that day.

From an architectural point of view, Boodle's is an admirable specimen of the work of Robert Adam; its street façade possesses many fine qualities, whilst the ironwork is of good design.

A year or two ago it was rumoured that, in order to comply with a clause in the lease, an additional story was to be added to the building. Up to the present time, however, to the gratification of all possessing the slightest taste, no alteration has been

made ; and it is earnestly to be hoped that in these days, when there is so much prating of culture and love of art, such an act of vandalism (which it is understood the club itself would bitterly deplore) will not be committed.

The saloon on the first-floor at Boodle's has a very fine and stately appearance, and opening out of it on each side are two little rooms. One of these, according to tradition, was, in the days of high play, occupied by a cashier who issued counters and occupied himself with details connected with the game ; the other was reserved for members wishing to indulge in gaming undisturbed by the noise of the crowd which thronged around the faro tables in the saloon. These tables, it is said, are still in the club. Towards the middle of the last century, though gaming had long ceased to take place in the saloon, there was a great deal of high gambling in the card-room upstairs. As far as can be ascertained, faro was once again played at that period.

Boodle's in old days played a great part in fashionable West End life. One of Gillray's caricatures, entitled "A Standing Dish at Boodle's," represents Sir Frank Standish sitting at a window of this club, which, it may be added, was noted for the large number of Baronets who were members. It was, indeed, said that anyone uttering the words, "Where is Sir John ?" in the club-house would immediately find himself surrounded by a crowd of members.

Boodle's, it should be added, has always been closely connected with Shropshire, from which county its membership then, as now, was largely recruited.

The club was originally called the *Savoir Vivre*, and at its inception was noted for its costly gaieties ; in 1774, for instance, its members spent 2,000 guineas upon a ridotto or masquerade.

Gibbon was a member of Boodle's, which, however, in the past, as to-day, principally consisted of county gentlemen.

Up to comparatively recent years, before Boodle's was reorganized, it was managed, not by a committee, but by a species of secret tribunal, the members of which were supposed to be unknown, though their duties corresponded with those of an ordinary club committee. This conclave conducted its proceedings with great secrecy, and its very existence was only inferred from the fact that, at intervals varying from six months to fifteen years, some printed notice appeared in the club rooms. Even so, this generally affected only dogs or strangers, both of whom old-fashioned members regarded with about equal dislike as unpleasant intruders.

Most of these notices, signed "By order of the Managers," quoted the "custom of the house existing from time immemorial," which, though unwritten, was then the only approach to a code of laws for the conduct of the club.

The old elections at Boodle's were peculiar, being presided over by the proprietor. Fifteen years ago or so, when Mr. Gayner, who then occupied that position, was still alive, he would take his seat by the ballot-box near the window in the back room on the ground-floor, whilst in the adjoining front room opening off it were the members. When a candidate was proposed, they walked across, and deposited

black or white balls, after which they retired again to the front room. After a short time, Mr. Gayner would shout out "Elected" or "Not elected," as the case might be, the ceremonial being gone through separately for every candidate. Wicked wags used to say that the proprietor never troubled to make a scrutiny as to the number of the balls, no candidate whom he considered suitable for the election ever being rejected, whilst an undesirable one was certain to meet with an evil fate, even should there be no black balls at all.

During Mr. Gayner's reign, Boodle's sustained a severe blow owing to the retirement of the Duke of Beaufort and a number of other old members. On certain evenings, according to a time-honoured custom, there was a house-dinner, and members taking part in this had to put down their names beforehand. The cost of wine, whether a man drank much or little, was pooled, and equally divided between everyone, a usage which, while it well suited some of the older men who belonged to a less temperate age, pressed heavily upon those of a later generation, some of whom scarcely drank anything at all. Resenting the injustice of this exactment, by which they were made to pay for other people's wine, some of the latter remonstrated with Mr. Gayner, and demanded that a more equitable arrangement should be made. The latter, realizing that such a protest was legitimate, then promised that matters should be set right, and to that end spoke to the Duke of Beaufort. The Duke replied that, whilst such a remonstrance might be just, he could not assent to any change without the

concurrence of the older members of the club who were in the habit of dining. The majority of these, not unnaturally perhaps, energetically protested against any alteration in an old custom, which, as they quite truthfully declared, had always suited them very well. The Duke then informed Mr. Gayner that if any change were made he and these members would leave the club. Mr. Gayner, however, stood firm, saying he had given his promise and must keep it, in consequence of which the Duke, and the "old guard" with him, carried out their threat, and left Boodle's for ever.

Mr. Gayner carried on the club on very liberal lines, and members were allowed extraordinary credit. They could cash cheques for any amount, for Gayner made a practice of keeping a very large sum of money in his safe. This, it is said, often contained as much as two or three thousand pounds, always in new notes.

At the time of Mr. Gayner's death, he was supposed to have been owed over £10,000 by certain members of the club. He appears to have regarded this as a sort of friendly charge, for a special clause in his will stated that no member of Boodle's was to be asked for money. The best-natured of men, Mr. Gayner frequently assisted members who were in financial difficulties. One of these, a young fellow who had recently joined the club, asked him whether he could indicate any means of raising £500, as he had debts to that amount which demanded immediate payment. "I can't think of allowing you to go to the Jews," said Mr. Gayner; "come with me to my room, and I'll put that all

right." Arrived in his sanctum, he produced notes for the required amount, and handed them to the young man, telling him he might settle the debt any time he liked.

After the death of Mr. Gayner, and of his sister, who succeeded him, it seemed at one time as if Boodle's might cease to exist. At a critical moment in the club's history, however, certain members stepped forward, and a complete reorganization was the result. The list of members was thoroughly sifted, and a most capable secretary, who still presides over the club's fortunes, assumed control.

Some alterations were made in the interior of the building, but care was taken to leave unimpaired the old-world charm of the house, which, from an architectural point of view, possesses much merit.

The fine saloon, which, as has been said, was originally a gambling-room, was thoroughly restored and made into a comfortable lounge ; it is a spacious and well-proportioned room, and contains a finely-designed mantelpiece and a very ornamental chandelier, the latter purchased after the reorganization. Except for some handsome inkstands and a few accessories which are of good design and execution, there are few works of art in this club, the hunting pictures on the staircase being of no particular value. Boodle's appears once to have possessed portraits of Charles James Fox and the Duke of Devonshire, but these have now disappeared.

The furniture and general appearance of the club is essentially English, and it is pleasant to observe that the air of old-world comfort for which Boodle's has always been noted remains unimpaired.

A curious feature of Boodle's is that the billiard-room is upstairs, a somewhat inconvenient arrangement not infrequent in clubs founded in past days.

It should be added that a rule enforcing the wearing of evening dress by members dining in the coffee-room still remains in force; but a smaller apartment is set aside for those who for any reason do not find it convenient to change their day clothes.

Arthur's Club, in St. James's Street, was the original abode of White's, which occupied it from 1698 to 1755, since which date the house has, of course, undergone a good deal of change. In the eighteenth century, owing to the association of a Mr. Arthur with the management of White's, the latter club was frequently spoken of as Arthur's; this naturally originated an idea that the two clubs were at one time connected, but such in reality was never the case, the presumed parent of Arthur's having been a coffee-house of that name.

The records of Arthur's Club as at present constituted are, unfortunately, somewhat scanty. It would appear, however, that after the migration of White's in 1755 another club was formed at 69 St. James's Street, and that it took the name of Arthur's, which it still retains.

In its present form the club-house was built by Mr. Hopper in 1825, though probably a certain portion of the original coffee-house, erected in 1736, was incorporated in the new building. A room on the ground-floor (at the back of the house) is said to have been the gaming-room of White's Club during its tenure of the premises up to 1755; but if this is the case the decorative frieze and

ceiling must have been added later, as in style they belong to the nineteenth century. During the rebuilding of 1825 everything seems to have been sacrificed to the staircase, which now occupies the very large hall, crowned by an elaborately-designed dome. There are, however, some handsome rooms, notably the library, in which is an eighteenth-century English sideboard of admirable design. In this and other rooms there is a good deal of the heavy, solid mahogany furniture so popular about seventy or eighty years ago. The examples in Arthur's Club are certainly the best of their kind, and are well in keeping with the design of the house. There are very few pictures or engravings here—a print or two of Arthur's as it was in old days, a few portraits of members, and an oil-painting of the late Sir John Astley (known as "the Mate") are about all.

Arthur's possesses a quantity of very fine silver plate, some of which dates from the eighteenth century.

This club still maintains some of the restrictions as regards smoking which were so general in the clubs of other days, no smoking being allowed in the library or morning-room. There are, however, ample facilities for indulgence in tobacco in other parts of the house—notably in the hall, where a very pleasant lounge has recently been contrived.

Only recently has the regulation which prohibited visitors from being admitted to dinner here been repealed. A room on the ground-floor (the one reputed to have been the old gambling-room of White's) is now set aside as a dining-room for those privileged to be the guests of a member of

this very charming club. There is no tradition at Arthur's of high play at hazard, but whist was once very popular. "Sheep points and bullocks" on the rubber were, it is said, quite common in the days when so many country gentlemen were members.

Arthur's, it should be added, has always been a very popular club with Wiltshire men, and its close connection with that county is still maintained.

As has been said, the chocolate-house in St. James's Street, started by Francis White in 1697, seems to have stood on the site of part of what is now Arthur's Club. John Arthur at this time was White's assistant. Here White carried on business till he died in 1711. His widow continued to prosper as proprietress of the house, which became the centre of the fashionable life of the day, and the place from which its amusements were directed. Advertisements in the papers show that "Mrs. White's Chocolate House, in St. James's Street," was the place of distribution of tickets for all the fashionable amusements of the early years of the eighteenth century. Opera was being produced at the Hay-market, and the announcement of the performance of each new piece is accompanied by the notice that tickets are to be obtained at Mrs. White's. A little later, Heidegger was taking the town by storm with his masquerades, ridottos, and balls. He was quick to see that Mrs. White's was an advantageous ground from which to reach his patrons of the aristocracy. He accordingly issued his admissions for these entertainments from White's, and requested those who were not using them to return them there, in order to prevent their falling into bad

hands, and so spoiling the select character of his assemblies.

John James Heidegger was a clever Swiss who, after leading a Bohemian life all over Europe, had come to London, where he had for a time co-operated with Handel in producing opera. His celebrity was chiefly due to a remarkable ability for organizing masquerades.

He was a very ugly man, and knew it. Consequently he would not have his portrait painted. The Duke of Montagu, however, determined to obtain a likeness, in order to play a trick at a masquerade.

The Duke induced the Swiss Count, as he was called, to make one of a select party, which (very appropriately) met to dine at the Devil Tavern. The rest of the company, all chosen for their powers of hard drinking, were in the plot, and a few hours after dinner Heidegger was carried out of the room dead drunk. A daughter of Mrs. Salmon, the waxwork-maker, was sent for, and took a mould from the unconscious man's face, from which she was ordered to make a cast in wax, and colour it to nature. The King, who was a party to the joke, was to be present, with the Countess of Yarmouth, at the next of Heidegger's masquerades. The Duke in the mean time bribed his valet to get all the information as to the clothes the Swiss was to wear on the occasion, procured a man of Heidegger's figure, and, with the help of the mask, made him up into a duplicate master of the revels.

When the King arrived with the Countess and

was seated, Heidegger, as was usual, gave the signal to the musicians in the gallery to play the National Anthem. As soon, however, as his back was turned, the sham Heidegger appeared, and ordered them to play "Over the Water to Charlie," the Jacobite song, and the most insulting and treasonable piece that could have been chosen to perform in the presence of royalty.

The whole room was at once thrown into confusion. Heidegger rushed into the gallery, raved, stamped, and swore, and accused the band of conspiring to ruin him. The bewildered musicians at once altered the tune to "God Save the King." Heidegger then left the gallery to make some arrangements in one of the smaller rooms.

As soon as he disappeared, the sham Heidegger again came forward, this time in the middle of the main room, in front of the gallery, and, imitating Heidegger's voice, damned the leader of the band for a blockhead, and asked if he had not told him to play "Over the Water" a minute before. The bandmaster, thinking Heidegger mad or drunk, lost his head, and ordered his men to strike up the Jacobite air a second time.

This was the signal for a confusion worse than before. There was great excitement and fainting of women, and the officers of the Guards who were present were only prevented from kicking Heidegger out of the house by the Duke of Cumberland, who was in the secret. Heidegger rushed back to the theatre, and was met by the Duke of Montagu, who told him that he had deeply offended the King, and that the best thing

he could do was to go at once to His Majesty and ask pardon for the behaviour of his men.

Heidegger accordingly approached the King, who, with the Countess, could barely keep his countenance, and made an abject apology. He was in the act of bowing to retire, when he heard his own voice behind him say: "Indeed, Sire, it was not my fault, but that devil's in my likeness!" He turned round, and for the first time saw his double, staggered, and was speechless. The Duke now saw that the joke had gone far enough, and whispered an explanation of the whole affair. Heidegger recovered himself and the masquerade went on, but he swore he would never attend another until "that witch the wax-woman was made to break the mould and melt down the mask" before his face.

Hogarth's plate, "*Heidegger in a Rage*," was suggested by this story.

Heidegger, it may be added, remained popular with the fashionable world up to his death. He lived at Barn Elms, where the King honoured him with a visit. He bore the reputation of great charity, and died in 1749, "immensely lamented," aged near ninety.

That White's Club was a great success from the very first is shown from the old rate-books, where the prosperity of Mrs. White, the proprietress, is reflected. The entries give us three degrees of comparison: At White's death, positive, "Widow White"; later, comparative, "Mrs. White"; later still, superlative, "Madam White." The Bumble of the period was evidently impressed by her

prosperity, and by the fine company which met at her house.

Madam White's, indeed, was never an ordinary coffee-house, a proof of which is that the usual charge of a penny made for entrance into such places appears to have been increased. In earlier days, when it was a chocolate-house, Steele (though he never became a member of the club) was a constant frequenter, for in 1716 he lived opposite. In the first number of the *Tatler*, published in 1709, he informs his readers that "all accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment shall be under the article of White's Chocolate House," while Will's was to supply the poetry, and the Grecian the learning. We find, accordingly, many of the early numbers of the *Tatler* dated from White's.

Madam White continued at the chocolate-house until some time between 1725 and 1729 (the exact year is uncertain, as the rate-books for those years are missing), and she probably left the place with a fortune.

At Mrs. White's demise, Arthur became proprietor, and largely added to the premises. These were burnt down in 1733, when he removed to Gaunt's Coffee-house till White's had been rebuilt. His son, Robert Arthur, appears as proprietor of the new house in 1736.

During Robert Arthur's life the most fashionable frequenters of his chocolate-house became more and more exclusive, and the proprietor soon found that catering for its members, all men of means and leisure, was the chief part of his business, and more lucrative than the custom of the general public.

His interests, of course, lay in the direction of meeting the wishes of his patrons, and in consequence of this members of the public were eventually excluded. White's Chocolate-house was thus transformed into the private and exclusive society since known as "White's."

Though White's was at this time reputed to be very exclusive, and although certain qualifications were indispensable, some of the members were drawn from a quite unaristocratic class.

In Davies's "Life of Garrick" is the following curious reference to Colley Cibber as a member of White's : "Colley, we are told, had the honour to be a member of the great club at White's ; and so I suppose might any other man who wore good clothes, and paid his money when he lost it. But on what terms did Cibber live with this society ? Why, he feasted most sumptuously, as I have heard his friend Victor say, with an air of triumphant exultation, with Mr. Arthur and his wife, and gave a trifle for his dinner. After he had dined, when the club-room door was opened, and the Laureate was introduced, he was saluted with loud and joyous acclamation of 'O King Coll ! Come in, King Coll !' and 'Welcome, welcome, King Colley !' and this kind of gratulation, Mr. Victor thought, was very gracious and very honourable."

The present White's Club dates from 1755, in which year Robert Arthur removed with the Young and Old Clubs which had met at his house—350 members in all—to the "Great House" in St. James's Street, which, though much altered, is still White's. He had purchased this building from Sir

Whistler Webster. One of its earlier occupants had been the Countess of Northumberland, whom Walpole mentions as one of the last to practise the unmaimed rites of the old peerage. "When she went out," says he, "a footman, bareheaded, walked on each side of her coach, and a second coach with her women attended her. I think, too, that Lady Suffolk told me that her granddaughter-in-law, the Duchess of Somerset, never sat down before her without her leave to do so."

In course of time the management of the club came into the hands of Martindale, a man whose name was connected with high play, of which he frequently figured as an organizer.

The house now began to have something of the organization which prevails in modern clubs.

About 1780, for instance, there was a regular club dinner at White's, when Parliament was sitting, at 12s. a head. In 1797 the charge for this had fallen to 10s. 6d. Hot suppers were provided at 8s., and lighter refreshments, with malt liquors, at 4s. At that time one of the rules decreed "that Every Member who plays at Chess, Draughts, or Backgammon do pay One Shilling each time of playing by daylight, and half-a-crown each by candlelight."

George Raggett, who succeeded Martindale as manager of White's, was quite a character in his way. He understood how to get on with gambling members, and owned the Roxburgh Club in St. James's Square, where whist was played for high stakes. Here, on one occasion, Hervey Combe, Tippoo Smith, Ward, and Sir John Malcolm sat down on a Monday evening, played through the

night, through the following Tuesday and Tuesday night, and finally separated at eleven on Wednesday morning. It is interesting to notice that the separation took place then only because Mr. Combe had to attend a funeral. That gentleman rose a winner of £30,000 from Sir John Malcolm.

Before leaving the club, Combe pulled out of his pocket a handful of counters, amounting to several hundred pounds, over and above the thirty thousand he had won from the Baronet, and gave them to Raggett, saying : “ I give them to you for sitting so long with us, and providing us with all we required.” It was the practice of the astute Raggett to attend his patrons personally whenever there was high play going on. “ I make it a rule never to allow any of my servants to be present when gentlemen play at my clubs,” said he ; “ for it is my invariable custom to sweep the carpet after the gambling is over, and I generally find on the floor a few counters, which pays me for my trouble of sitting up.” This practice made his fortune.

As time went on, the club-house of White’s underwent considerable alteration. In 1811, for instance, it was resolved to remove the entrance by converting the second window from the bottom of the house into a door, and to enlarge the morning-room by taking in the old entrance hall. This gave room for an additional window. The old doorway was utilized for this purpose, and the famous “ Bow-Window at White’s” was built out over the entrance steps, which may still be seen supporting it.

Directly this window was made, Brummell, then in the heyday of his fashionable prosperity, took



WHITE'S CLUB PREVIOUS TO 1811.

possession of it, and, together with his followers, made it a very shrine of fashion and an institution of West End club life. At that time only a select few dared to sit in it; an ordinary member of the club would as soon have thought of taking his seat on the throne in the House of Lords as of appropriating one of the chairs in the bow-window. Nice questions of etiquette arose in connection with the bow-window, and were duly discussed and settled. Its occupants were so much in evidence to the outside world in St. James's Street that ladies of their acquaintance could not fail to recognize them in passing. It was decided, after anxious discussion, that no greeting should pass from the bow-window or from any window in the club. As a consequence, the hats of the dandies were doffed to no passers-by.

Not a few of the old school resented monopoly of the famous window by Brummell and Lord Alvanley. "Damn the fellows!" said old Colonel Sebright; "they are upstarts, and fit only for the society of tailors." Brummell made amusing use of his connection with the club. He was reproached by an angry father whose son had gone astray in the Beau's company. "Really, I did all I could for the young fellow," said he; "I once gave him my arm all the way from White's to Watier's." Later, when he was coming to the end of his means and of his career in England, some of his friends who had assisted him with loans became importunate. One of these pressed him for the repayment of £500. "I paid you," said the Beau. "Paid me! When, pray?" "Why, when I was standing at the

window at White's, and said as you passed, 'How d'you do !'"

About 1814 Brummell played much and unsuccessfully at White's. One night—the fifth of a most relentless run of ill-luck—his friend Pemberton Mills heard him exclaim that he had lost every shilling, and only wished someone would bind him never to play again. "I will," said Mills, and, taking out a ten-pound note, he offered it to Brummell on condition that he should forfeit a thousand if he played at White's within a month from that evening. The Beau took it, and for a few days discontinued coming to the club; but about a fortnight after, Mills, happening to go in, found him gambling again. Of course the thousand pounds were forfeited; but his friend, instead of claiming them merely went up to him, and, touching him gently on the shoulder, said: "Well, Brummell, you might at least give me back the ten pounds you had the other evening."

After Brummell's day was over, Lord Alvanley (a coloured print of whom as "The Man from White's" still hangs in the club) became the chief of the bow-window party. Most of this nobleman's time seems to have been spent in endeavouring to get rid of a large fortune, the inheritance of which had caused him to leave the Coldstream Guards, in which he had served with distinction in the Peninsular War. Lord Alvanley was the most noted bon-vivant of his day, and was utterly regardless of what his dinners cost. One of his fancies was to have a cold apricot tart on his sideboard every day throughout the year. Another instance of his

prodigality was the payment of 200 guineas to Gunter for a luncheon-basket, which by an oversight had been forgotten in arranging a day's boating on the Thames—a costly picnic indeed!

On one occasion Lord Alvanley organized a dinner at White's, at which it was agreed that whoever could produce the most expensive dish should dine for nothing. The winner was the organizer, whose dish was a fricassée composed entirely of the *noix*, or small pieces at each side of the back, taken from thirteen kinds of birds, among them being one hundred snipe, forty woodcocks, twenty pheasants, and so on, the total amounting to about three hundred birds. The cost of the ridiculous dish amounted to £108 5s.

This extravagant and eccentric peer, who, it was said, never paid cash for anything, was once asked by the sarcastic Colonel Armstrong, who knew of this failing, what he had given for a fine horse he was riding. "Nothing," said his lordship; "I owe Milton 200 guineas for him." Another failing of Lord Alvanley's caused his friends at country-houses some anxiety. He always read in bed, and would never blow out his candle, his method of extinguishing that light being usually to fling it into the middle of the room; if this was ineffectual, he would throw a pillow at it. Sometimes he would vary the proceedings by putting the burning candle bodily under his bolster.

Another frequenter of the bow - window was Lord Allen, who became such a confirmed lover of London that, during the latter part of his life, it was said his only walk was from White's to Crock-

ford's, over the way and back again. It was also said that he was so accustomed to the roar of the London traffic, that to get him to sleep at Dover, where he was visiting Lord Alvanley, that nobleman hired a hackney coach to drive in front of his window at the inn all night, and sent out the boots at proper intervals to call the time and the weather, like the London watchmen.

Lord Allen was a man of very moderate means, and eked out his income by dining out as much as possible. An incivil remark at dinner to an old lady caused her to say : " My lord, your title must be as good as board wages to you ! "

Lord Allen was generally known as " King Allen." In course of time, as a result of his lounging life about town, he lost most of his not very abundant money, when he withdrew to Dublin, where, in Merrion Square, he slept behind a large brass plate with " Viscount Allen " upon it, which verified the old lady's remark ; for it was as good to him as a regular income, and brought endless invitations from people eager to feed a Viscount at any hour of the day or night.

Many distinguished men have belonged to White's, and many more have tried to do so. Louis Napoleon, during his exile in London, is said much to have desired to be a member of White's, but his wish was never gratified.

Count d'Orsay, who drew the portraits of many of his contemporaries, some of whom were members of this club (lithographs of which portraits hang in the morning-room), made several attempts to secure election, but without success. As he was very

popular amongst the men of his day, it was probably merely the fact of his being a foreigner which kept him out.

Though the shell of Sir Whistler Webster's "Great House" still exists at White's, many structural alterations have been made from time to time. The most notable of these was undertaken in 1850, when Raggett, the then proprietor, entrusted to Mr. Lockyer the work of remodelling the façade of the old club-house. Four bas-reliefs, designed by Mr. George Scharf, jun., representing the four seasons, were, under Lockyer's direction, inserted in the place of four sash-windows. At this period the old balcony rails would seem to have been moved, and the present elaborate cast-iron work substituted —a very doubtful improvement. The interior of the club-house was also then redecorated by the firm of Morant, and Victorian mantelpieces were introduced into some of the rooms. In all probability these alterations, carried out at a period when taste was at a low ebb, robbed White's of much which the more enlightened taste of to-day would have wished preserved.

The management of White's by Henry Raggett only ended at his death in 1859. He was the last of the proprietors of the club who were also the owners of the freehold of the club building.

Raggett was succeeded as manager by Percival, who continued in this position till his death in 1882. The Misses Raggett, sisters of the late proprietor, still owned the club-house, and consequently a certain feeling of insecurity prevailed as to the future of the club. In 1868 a proposal was made that the

building should be purchased from the Misses Raggett by the members ; but it was found that the property was in Chancery, and that nothing could be done. The club, still feeling unsettled, decided to form a fund to provide against eventualities connected with the tenure of the house. This they accomplished by raising the entrance fee to nineteen guineas, ten of which were devoted to the purpose, and placed in the hands of trustees.

Lord Hartington reported, in 1870, that he had at last induced the trustees of the Raggetts to name a price for the sale of the club building. This was fixed at £60,000. He reported at the same time that Percival held an unexpired lease of ten years at a rental of £2,100. The club very naturally refused to entertain the idea of purchase at any such figure. A reduced offer of £50,000, made a month later, they also refused.

A year afterwards the place was sold by auction. With a view to purchase, members of White's had subscribed for debentures to the amount of £16,000. At the auction, the representative of the club bid £38,000 for the property, but it was bought by Mr. Eaton, M.P., afterwards Lord Cheylesmore, for £46,000.

After some fruitless negotiations in 1877, when the number of members had been increased to 600, Percival, negotiating on his own account with Mr. Eaton, announced that he had obtained a new lease of thirty years, from 1881, at a rent of £3,000 a year. In 1882 Mr. Percival died. The management of White's then passed to his son, as representative of Mrs. Percival, the widow.

In 1888 matters arrived at a crisis. Mrs. Percival announced her intention of terminating her lease with Lord Cheylesmore, and it was proposed by the committee to grant her a sum of £1,200 in consideration of her carrying on the club business until the end of the year. There were various meetings at which the proposal was discussed, and much was said on both sides. Eventually it was carried, and negotiations were entered into with two members of the club who had expressed themselves willing to take over the management. In July of 1888 the management of the Percivals came to an end by the signing of an agreement for the future conduct of White's by a member of the club, Mr. Algernon Bourke.

Under his management White's resumed its youth, and was again invested with an air of sprightly insouciance, which in latter years had been conspicuous by its absence. Drastic structural alterations, carried out under the direction of Mr Bourke, much improved the convenience of the building. The courtyard, where was an old Well from which, up to quite recent years, the water used in the club was drawn, was roofed over and converted into a spacious billiard-room, and the large front room was converted into a dining-room, certain alterations being made in the apartment behind previously used for that purpose.

Within the last two years some further alterations of a very judicious nature have been carried out in the club-house. An upper story containing servants' bedrooms has been added, but this has scarcely altered the appearance of the house, and the façade

remains practically the same as it has been for the last fifty-seven years.

Portfolios seem formerly to have been preserved at White's, which contained engravings of well-known members. Many of these were framed by Mr. Bourke, who, adding to the number, formed the present valuable and interesting collection. On each of these prints the date at which its subject belonged to White's is inscribed in pencil. As a club record of past membership the series is unique.

In the dining-room of the club are several paintings, and among them is a portrait of the first Duke of Wellington, by Count d'Orsay. This, I believe, is one of two portraits painted by the Count. The Iron Duke, it is said, was much pleased with them, and declared that D'Orsay was the only artist who had ever painted him as a gentleman.

Other oil-paintings here represent George II and George III—a modern portrait shows the late Duke of Cambridge in undress uniform. There are also a few other pictures, including two of horses by John Wooton. All the pictures in this room, with the exception of the portrait of George II, originally in the house dining-room (now the committee-room next door), were acquired after the reconstitution of the club by Mr. Bourke in 1888. On the other hand, some Italian pictures and a curious portrait of a woman, supposed to have been in White's since its foundation, have disappeared. The same fate, unfortunately, has befallen the fine old silver plate which belonged to the club up to comparatively recent years; and most of the original furniture is in other hands.

The whimsical coat of arms which, carved in wood, hangs over the fireplace in the entrance hall is, of course, a modern copy of the design invented by Horace Walpole and his friends at Strawberry Hill.

The worth of some of the old furniture in White's was great, as may be realized when it is stated that the present possessor of two small sideboards formerly in the dining-room was a short time ago offered £600 apiece for them by a well-known expert. The original eighteenth-century dining-room chairs (the place of which is now supplied by copies) were also of great interest and value.

A curious old oak table, now in the committee-room at White's, is in no way connected with the history of that club. It was originally the dining-table of the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks, and has on it three carvings. Two of these represent the mitre and Beefeater's cap which figured in the ceremonial of that institution, and the centre one a gridiron, which was its crest. As has already been mentioned, this table was purchased by Mr. Bourke.

A richly decorated piano which formerly stood in what is now the card-room has gone, as have also a very ornamental French weather-glass and some other *objets d'art*.

Of late years great efforts have been made to recover anything connected with the past history of White's, and already, owing to the efforts of certain members, several have been discovered and obtained. These include the quaint original ballot-box and a complete set of the old gaming counters,

which, like those at Brooks's, are inscribed with the sums they represented.

A feature of the downstairs lounge at White's is the belt presented to Heenan after his celebrated fight with Tom Sayers. This interesting trophy, which is lent by a member (Mr. Gilbert Elliot), now hangs over the mantelpiece beneath a not very successful bas-relief of the late King, which was placed there during the alterations in 1888. It is said that an unsophisticated visitor to the club-house being taken into the lounge, after glancing at the silver belt and the bas-relief above, eagerly inquired, "Did the King win it?" which remark naturally occasioned much amusement.

In the lease of White's Club-house is a clause, dating from the middle of the eighteenth century, which lays down that copies of the *Times* and of the *Racing Calendar* should always be preserved, in consequence of which, up to a few years ago, the cellars were filled with an enormous mass of paper, much of which had been almost reduced to pulp, owing to inflows of water during floods. The collection is now stored elsewhere.

White's Club is just a year older than the Bank of England. It was established before the last of the Stuarts had left the throne, and a number of its members have fought England's battles on land and sea. One of these was Lord St. Vincent, the great sailor, who brought the West Indies to the British Crown and won the naval battle of St. Vincent. Rodney was a member, and his wife, when her husband had been greatly impoverished by gaming debts and election expenses, sent the

hat round for him at White's. Very inappropriately, however, the money was provided by a Frenchman, the Marshal de Biron. George Keppel, third Earl of Albemarle, who captured Havana in 1762, was another naval member, as was Charles Saunders, who co-operated with General Wolfe in the assault of the Heights of Abraham ; so too was Boscawen, who went by the name of "Old Dreadnought."

Besides having had a great number of gallant soldiers and sailors on its list, this club can also boast that for many years the destinies of Great Britain were practically in the hands of certain of its members.

Sir Robert Walpole and his able rival, William Pulteney, afterwards Earl of Bath, were members of the old club at White's in 1756. In the debate on the motion for the impeachment of Sir Robert in 1741, the latter, in the course of a speech, quoted a verse from Horace. Pulteney rose and remarked that the right honourable gentleman's Latin and logic were alike inaccurate. Walpole denied it, and a bet of a guinea was made across the floor of the House. The matter was then referred to the Clerk at the table, a noted scholar, and decided against the Minister.

The guinea was handed to Pulteney, and is now in the British Museum, with the following inscription in his handwriting :

"This guinea, I desire, may be kept as an heirloom. It was won of Sir Robert Walpole in the House of Commons ; he asserting the verse in Horace to be 'Nulli pallescere culpæ,' whereas I

laid the wager of a guinea that it was ‘Nulla pallescere culpa.’ I told him that I could take the money without blush on my side, but believed it was the only money he ever gave in the House where the giver and receiver ought not equally to blush. This guinea, I hope, will prove to my posterity the use of knowing Latin, and encourage them in their learning.”

The betting-book at White’s, which is still in existence, bears witness to the love of a past age for speculating about every manner of thing, grave or gay. At one period of the eighteenth century chess was in high favour at White’s. Several matches are recorded in the betting book. Lord Howe, for instance, engages “to play twelve games at chess with Lord Egmont, and bets Lord Egmont twelve guineas to six guineas of each game.” It is also recorded that M. de Mirepoix, the French Ambassador, sent an invitation to all chess-players of both clubs* to meet him for a game. He spells the word “clubs” “clamps.”

Lord Montfort, who eventually met with a tragic death at his own hands, in consequence, it would appear, of the impecuniosity which followed on his wild gaming, made a curious bet as to his powers as a horseman :

July ye 17th, 1752.

Ld. Montfort to ride six days running.

1st. Ld. Montfort gives Ld. Downe one guinea to receive 10 gs. when he rides 35 miles within the first day.

* White’s was formed from the old and new clubs into which it was originally divided.

2nd. Ld. Montfort gives Ld. Ashburnham 1 guinea to receive 10 gs. when he rides 25 miles within the second day. *pd.*

3rd. Ld. Montfort gives Ld. Waldegrave one guinea, to receive 10 gs. when he rides 20 miles within the third day. *paid.*

4th. Ld. Montfort gives Mr. Watson 1 guinea, to receive 10 gs. when he rides 15 miles within the fourth day. *pd.*

5th. Ld. Montfort gives Ld. Downe 1 guinea, to receive 10 gs. when he rides 10 miles within the fifth day.

6th. Ld. Montfort gives Ld. Howe 1 guinea to receive 10 guineas when he rides 5 miles within the Sixth day. *Paid.*

Another wager of this nobleman dealt with the matrimonial intentions of the proprietor of White's :

Ld. Montfort wagers Ld. Ravensworth one hundred guineas, Duke of Devonshire Fifty guineas, and Ld. Hartington fifty guineas, that Mr. Arthur is not married in three year from ye date hereof, March 11th, 1754.

N.B. Bob goes Twenty guineas with Ld. Montfort in this bet.* (Now Sir Robt. Mackreth.)

The following are a few of the very numerous bets of which account is given in this curious record :

November 7th, 1758.

Mr. Cadogan engages to pay Mr. Willis twenty guineas, in consideration of one guinea received from him, whenever he has in his possession, either by purchase or gift, a Post Chaise with a crane neck.

* A note added : “‘Bob,’ the waiter, married the daughter of Mr. Arthur, the proprietor of the club, became prosperous, and was afterwards knighted. He was subsequently Member for Castle Rising.”

The following bet, recorded in 1813, would appear to refer to some incident in the life of Mr. Creevy which has escaped notice :

Col. Osborn bets Sir J. Copley 5 gs. that Mr. Creevy is imprisoned before the announcement of the capture of Dantzic is received.

J. COBLEY.
J. OSBORN. *pd.*

April 2nd.

Mr. Methuen bets Col. Stanhope ten guineas to 1, that a certain worthy Baronet understood between them does not of necessity part with his gold ice-pails, before this day twelvemonth ; the ice-pails being found at a pawnbroker's, will not entitle Col. Stanhope to receive his ten guineas.

H. F. R. STANHOPE.
PAUL METHUEN.

White's, April 10th, 1813.

Mr. Raikes bets Sir Joseph Copley ten guineas that he does not play at cards or dice at any Club in London in a year from this date.

settled.

May 22nd, 1818.

Lord Binning bets Lord Falmouth five guineas that a Roman Catholic Bishop upon formally abjuring his Catholic faith, may be made a Protestant Bishop without any new ordination in the Protestant Church.

BINNING.
FALMOUTH. *pd.*

April 17th, 1825.

Lord George Bentinck bets Col. Walpole a Rouleau that the Duke of St. Albans marries

Mrs. Coutts within six months of this day. Ld. Elliott stands half the bet with Ld. G. Bentinck.

G. BENTINCK.

January 8, 1826.

July 8, paid a pony to the waiter for Col. Walpole.—G. BENTINCK.

1 June pd. a pony Elliott.

Lord Maidstone bets Ld. Kelburne six bets of £50 each that he has six horses now in his own stable which he will ride over and shall clear a 5 feet wall in the Leath country in Lincolnshire.

SIR RICHARD SUTTON, BART. }
..... } *to be umpires.*

Lord Adolphus FitzClarence bets Mr. George Bentinck £10 that there is not a shot fired in anger in London during the year 1851.

Mr. F. Cavendish bets Mr. H. Brownrigg 2/1 that he does not kill the bluebottle fly before he goes to bed.

W. FREDERICK CAVENDISH.
HENRY M. BROWNRIGG. *recd. H.B.*

July 17, 1856.

At one time very large sums changed hands over the whist-table at White's. One of the most distinguished gamblers was Lord Rivers, known in Paris as Le Wellington des Joueurs. This nobleman, it is said, once lost £3,400 at whist by not remembering that the seven of hearts was in! He played at hazard for the highest stakes that anyone could be got to play, and at one time was supposed to have won nearly £100,000; but

all, together with a great deal more, went at Crockford's.

In earlier days White's appears to have been an occasional resort of very queer characters indeed. In Hogarth's gambling scene at White's we see the highwayman, with the pistols peeping out of his pocket, waiting by the fireside till the heaviest winner takes his departure, in order to recoup himself of his losings. And in the "Beaux' Stratagem," Aimwell asks of Gibbet : " Ha'n't I seen your face at White's ?"

M'Clean, the fashionable highwayman, had a lodging in St. James's Street, over against White's ; and he was as well known about St. James's as any gentlemen who lived in that quarter, and who, perhaps, went upon the road, too. When M'Clean was taken, in 1750, Horace Walpole tells us that Lord Mountfort, at the head of half White's, went the first day ; his aunt was crying over him. As soon as they were withdrawn, she said to him, knowing they were of White's : " My dear, what did the Lords say to you ? Have you ever been concerned with any of them ?"

Mr. Pelham, the Prime Minister, who had originally been an officer, was a well-known frequenter of the gaming-table at White's, to which he resorted even when in high office—a habit alluded to in the following lines :

" Or chair'd at White's, amidst the doctors sit,
Teach oaths to gamesters, and to nobles wit."

General Scott, the father-in-law of George Canning and the Duke of Portland, was known to have

won at White's £200,000, thanks to his notorious sobriety and knowledge of this game. The General possessed a great advantage over his companions by avoiding the excesses which used not unfrequently to muddle their brains. He confined himself to dining off something very light, such as a boiled chicken with toast and water, and in consequence always came to the whist-table with a clear head. Possessing a remarkable memory, with great coolness of judgment, he was able honestly to win the enormous sum of £200,000.

At Almack's, a rival institution to White's, there was also much high play. According to the rule of the house, every player had to keep not less than twenty to fifty guineas on the table in front of him, and often there was as much as £10,000 in gold on the table. The players, before sitting down at the gaming-table, removed their embroidered clothes and substituted frieze greatcoats, or turned their coats inside out for luck. They also put on short leather sleeves to save their lace ruffles, and in order to guard their eyes from the light and keep their hair in order they wore high-crowned straw hats, with broad brims adorned with flowers and ribbons ; whilst to conceal their emotions they also wore shades or masks.

George Selwyn, one evening at White's, saw a member connected with the postal service, Sir Everard Fawkener (the present writer's great-grandfather, and an indifferent card-player), losing a large sum of money at piquet. Selwyn, pointing to the successful player, remarked : " See now, he is robbing the mail ! "

On another occasion, in 1756, observing Mr. Ponsonby, the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, tossing about bank-bills at a hazard-table at Newmarket, “Look,” he said, “how easily the Speaker passes the money-bills !”

Of the gambling at White’s in former days so much has been written that it would be superfluous to dwell upon this phase in the history of the club when George Selwyn played night after night. Selwyn, however, was something more than a mere gambler, and possessed in a conspicuous degree the power of scourging folly and self-pretension. The following is an instance of his powers in this direction :

One morning, when Selwyn was at the home of the Duke of Queensberry, a newly-appointed Commissioner of Taxes made his appearance. This man was in a tumult of joy at his preferment ; but, though it was to the Duke he had primarily been indebted for his good fortune, he hardly thanked him ; for he was possessed with the notion that it was from his own merit that he had acquired the promotion. Entering the room, he assumed several consequential airs, thinking that he was now as great a man as the Duke himself.

“So, Mr. Commissioner,” said Selwyn—“you will excuse me, sir, I forget your name—you are at length installed, I find.” The word “installed” conveyed an awkward idea ; for the new Commissioner’s grandfather had been a stable-boy.

“Why, sir,” replied the other, “if you mean to say that I am at length appointed, I have the pleasure to inform you that the business is settled.

Yes, I am appointed ; and though our noble friend, the Duke here, did oblige me with letters to the Minister, yet these letters were of no use ; and I was positively promoted to the office without knowing a syllable about the matter, or even taking a single step in it."

" What ! not a single step ?" cried George.

" No, not one, upon my honour," replied the new-fledged placeman. " Egad, sir ! I did not walk a foot out of my way for it."

" And egad, sir !" retorted Selwyn, " you never before uttered half so much truth in so few words. Reptiles, sir, can neither walk nor take steps—nature ordained they should creep."

Like many men of his day, Selwyn did and said many things which a later age would call very snobbish. Happening to be at Bath when it was nearly empty, he was induced, for the mere purpose of killing time, to cultivate the acquaintance of an elderly gentleman he was in the habit of meeting in the Rooms. In the height of the following season Selwyn encountered his old associate in St. James's Street. He endeavoured to pass unnoticed, but in vain. " What ! do you not recollect me ?" exclaimed the indignant provincial. " I recollect you perfectly," replied Selwyn, " and when I next go to Bath I shall be most happy to become acquainted with you again."

Though Selwyn appears to have preferred White's, he did not entirely confine his attention to it. It was in his day the fashion to belong to as many clubs as possible—Wilberforce, indeed, mentions no fewer than five to which he himself belonged :

Brooks's, Boodle's, White's, Miles and Evans's in New Palace Yard, and Goosetree's, on the site of which stands the Marlborough. As their names imply, all these clubs were originally mere coffee-houses, kept by men of the above names, the most celebrated of whom, next to the proprietors of White's, was Brookes, or Brooks, who founded the present club in St. James's Street.

CHAPTER IV

BROOKS'S, THE COCOA-TREE, AND THE THATCHED HOUSE

AT one time considerable rivalry existed between White's and Brooks's. Great festivities took place all over the country in the spring of 1789, and both White's and Brooks's gave balls, which seem to have occasioned much unpleasant feeling between the party of the Prince of Wales and that of the Court.

Pitt was a member of both clubs (having been elected to Brooks's in 1781, on the proposal of Fox), but he had a decided partiality for White's.

The Prince detested White's as the chosen club of Pitt, who had opposed him during the King's illness, and, as soon as the entertainment was announced, forbade his friends to attend it, and it is said, together with the Duke of York, sent their tickets to be sold at a public library.

Three weeks later, on April 21, Brooks's followed with a grand ball at the Opera House, one of the tickets for which is framed in the "strangers' room" on the ground-floor of the club. As a matter of fact, the Prince's conduct towards the ball at White's gave a party character to that at Brooks's, with the result that all the ladies of the Court refused to attend.

Brooks's was originally in Pall Mall, on or near the site of the present Marlborough Club, and the

precise date of its removal into St. James's Street cannot be positively fixed ; but certain it is that the existing house was built by Brooks, from designs by Holland, the architect, in 1778, and in a letter to G. Selwyn, dated in October of that year, T. Townshend—afterwards first Viscount Sydney—says : “ As a proof of our increasing opulence, I need only show the New Opera House, which is now fitting up at a monstrous expense . . . and Brooks’s new house, fitted up with great magnificence, which is to be opened in a week or ten days.” It was in consequence of these great expenses that the annual subscription was doubled.

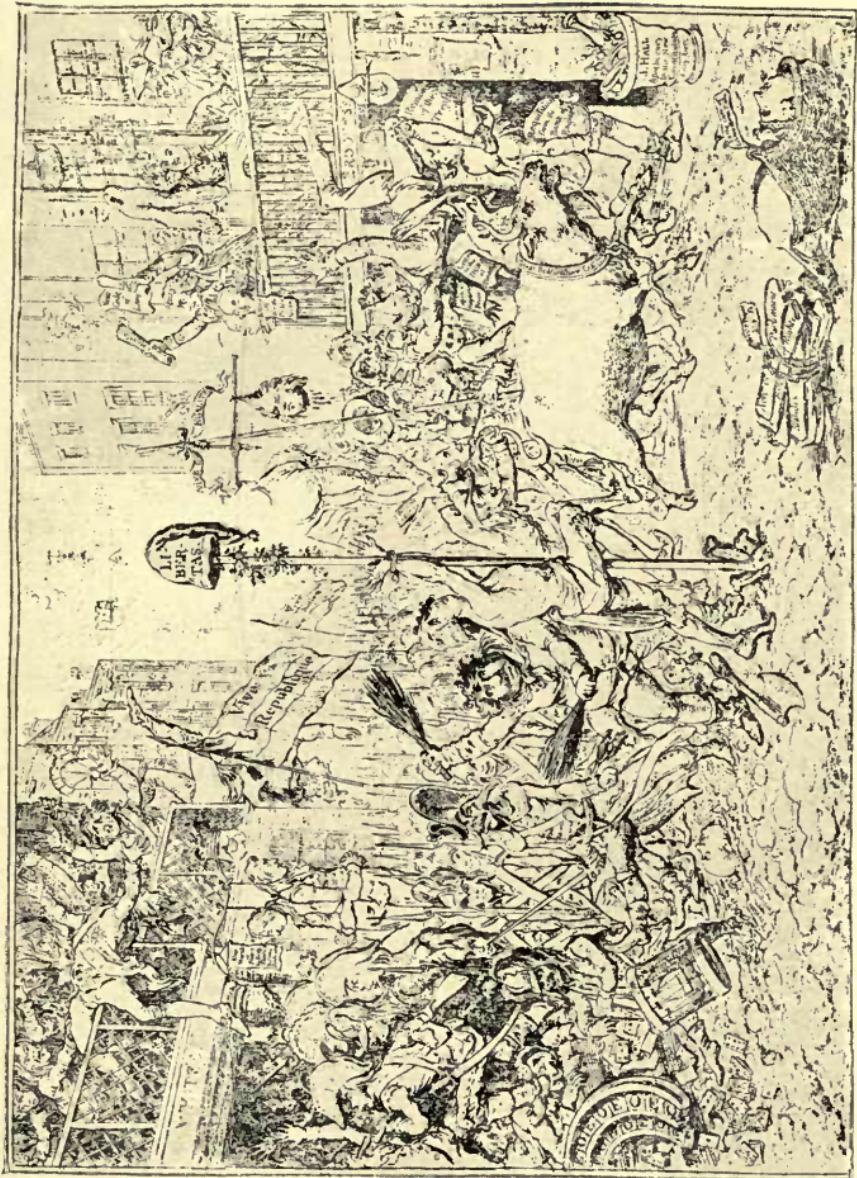
The originator of Brooks’s seems to have been the Scotsman Almack, whose real name was Macall, and in its early days the club consisted of 150 members at an annual subscription of four guineas, with the proviso that, “ in case that proportion falls short of 400 guineas on the whole, such deficiency shall be made good to Mr. Almack.” But this small number of members soon expanded, and by 1776 had been doubled, by successive additions of twenty, thirty, fifty, and fifty. Fifteen years passed, and in 1791 another 150 were added, and 100 more in 1816, bringing the numbers up to 550. Twenty-five more were added in 1823, and a like number in 1857, bringing the total up to 600, at which it remained till 1901, when it was raised to 650, the present number.

At the end of 1778 the club moved into its present premises, the new house being owned by Brooks or Brookes, and after that date his name was assumed as a title.

The subscription, fixed at four guineas in 1764,

PROMISED HORRORS OF THE FRENCH INVASION, BY GILRAY.

Showing both White's and Brook's Clubs.



was before 1779 raised to eight, and on May 25 in that year the committee, or whatever was the governing body, granted Brooks an extra two guineas for two years only, "in consideration of the great expense he hath been at in erecting and fitting up his house"—viz., the present house. Brooks compounded with those that were willing, for sixteen guineas paid down in advance.

On April 17, 1791, the subscription was again raised to ten guineas, and in addition an entrance fee of five guineas was imposed; and it was further resolved that every member should pay one guinea in addition to the subscription for that year, "in order that the new Regulations about Dinner, Forfeits, etc., may take place immediately."

So matters continued until 1815, when the subscription was increased to eleven guineas, "in consideration of the great expense the Masters of the Club had been put to by various alterations of the Club-house."

On March 18, 1817, an additional guinea was imposed—to be paid on January 1, 1818—for the express purpose of increasing the size of the coffee-room.

In 1828 it was resolved that the extra guinea added to the annual subscription in 1815 should be reserved to form a fund, to be invested in the names of the trustees, to be employed as the club should thereafter direct. The present subscription is eleven guineas.

The original rules are very strict on the subject of arrears, Rule XX providing that all subscriptions shall be paid between March 1 and June 25; other-

wise the defaulter is to be *ipso facto* excluded and his name erased. This excellent provision, however, seems to have been more honoured in the breach than in the observance, for on June 8, 1800, Griffin, who was the Master, was "authorized to inform members that, being in arrears, they are no longer members of the Club, and the Managers have directed him to recover the arrears due to him." Yet, notwithstanding the resolution of the managers, on May 3, 1806, Griffin reported the arrears to amount to £6,000, which large sum had in 1809 increased to £10,000.

This generous confidence of the Masters in the ultimate solvency of members endured until the death of Banderet, in spite of a periodical protest against the large amount of house accounts outstanding for dinners and other disbursements ; and on one occasion it is said that he represented to the managers that a certain member was £800 in his debt, and, although he was quite ready to trust the gentleman to any amount, he did think that, under the circumstances, he need not insist upon having ortolans for his dinner every night.

There is a very general impression that the eleventh guinea of the subscription, still paid, was first imposed to pay the debts of C. J. Fox, but of this there is no evidence whatever. That Fox's debts were paid by his friends is certain, and that he had many friends in Brooks's is equally so, and they doubtless were the chief contributors, but as individuals only ; the idea that Brooks's ever contributed in its corporate capacity is absolutely without foundation.

The regulations passed in 1828 laid down that dinner at 10s. 6d. per head shall be ready at a quarter before six every day from November 1 to the Prince of Wales's birthday (August 12th). “If the number at dinner shall not exceed four, they shall have no reckoning to pay but for wine, fruits, etc. If the number exceeds four, the 2 guineas shall be deducted from the whole reckoning.”

Dinner was served at half-past four ; and the bill was brought in at seven. Supper began at eleven, and ended at half an hour after midnight. The cost of the dinner was 8s. a head, and of the supper 6s. ; and anyone who had been present during any part of the meal hours paid his share of the wine, in accordance with the old law of British conviviality.

No gaming was allowed in the “eating room” except “tossing up for reckonings,” under the penalty of paying the whole bill of the members present.

The ballot took place between eleven at night and one in the morning, which custom continued until 1844, when the hours were altered to between three and five in the afternoon. A single black ball excluded, and a member who joined any other club, except White’s, was at once struck off the books.

As manager of the club, Brooks appears to have been a most accommodating individual. He is described by Tickell, in a copy of verses addressed to Sheridan, as

“ Liberal Brookes, whose speculative skill
Is hasty credit and a distant bill ;
Who, nursed in clubs, despairs a vulgar trade,
Exults to trust, and blushes to be paid.”

It may be added that, as a consequence of the above-mentioned diffidence, Brooks died a poor man in 1782. Indeed, according to tradition, his creditors were so rapacious that, in order to defeat them, his body was interred in a small vault, still existing, under the pavement of St. James's Street. For this, however, there is no sort of evidence in the records of the club, and the legend may have been suggested by the smallness of the vault, which would just contain a coffin.

Brooks was succeeded in the management by a Mr. Griffin, whose name can be traced down to 1815, though for the six years preceding this date the management figures as "Griffin and Co." In 1815, however, he disappears, and at some subsequent time the mastership devolved upon Wheelwright, who in 1824 took Halse into partnership, and in 1831 retired; whereupon Halse took Henry Banderet into partnership, himself retiring in 1846, and receiving a grant from the club of £500 on account of his interest in the unexpired lease of the house, and 50 guineas for the surrender of his lodging therein. From that time until his death in 1880, Banderet continued Master; and to him is to be attributed the credit of having established in Brooks's that refined if somewhat solemn comfort which resembles rather the luxury of a first-class private house than a club, and which has led to its being humorously described as "like dining in a Duke's house with the Duke lying dead upstairs." His attention to his duties as Master was unremitting, and it was said that, during the thirty-four years in which he filled that post, he had never been known to

be absent, except on one occasion when he was persuaded to take a holiday; but he found himself so miserable that by noon he was back at Brooks's, which he never afterwards left until his death, when the entire management was taken over by the club.

As a building, Brooks's is a handsome and suitable club-house, which from time to time has sustained a number of alterations, most of them of a judicious kind. The balcony on the first-floor, formerly such a feature of the façade, has long been removed.

About twenty years ago considerable changes were made in the club-house, and No. 2 Park Place was incorporated as part of it. Up to that time the coffee-room had been what is now the strangers' smoking-room on the first-floor, the only smoking-room being the round room at the back of the house, now divided into dressing-rooms. There was practically no library, the only apology for one being a small room beyond the coffee-room, containing little except Parliamentary reports, back volumes of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*, and novels from a circulating library. Opening out of this library was another small room into which hardly anyone ever went, and through that, again, a very small dressing-room which hardly anyone ever used. During the alterations these uncomfortable little rooms, together with the rest of No. 2 Park Place, were swept away, and the present coffee-rooms, with library above, erected in their place, the old drawing-rooms and coffee-rooms being given up to smokers and their guests. At the same time the hall and staircase were entirely reconstructed.

Amongst the important reforms introduced after Banderet's death was the institution of club bedrooms, and also the privilege of inviting guests to dinner, and—in May 1896—to luncheon.

There are some interesting relics of old days at Brooks's, including a complete set of the gaming counters used when the club was the scene of much high play. These are well displayed in a case at the bottom of the staircase. In the room upstairs, once the scene of so many late sittings, the old gambling-table still remains. A semicircular cut in this is said to have been made in order to accommodate the portly form of Charles James Fox, a pastel portrait of whom, by Russell, is one of the treasures of the club.

Some old prints of Brooks's in former days (and a water-colour drawing of the gaming-room by Rowlandson in particular) convey an excellent idea of the past life of the club, while a few portraits of celebrated members decorate its walls.

The fine room upstairs which was once devoted to high play would appear to retain much of its ancient appearance, and the decorative scheme employed on the walls seems to have been little changed.

A treasured possession of this club is the old betting-book, in which are many curious entries, one of which tells that Mr. Thynne, having, according to a note written opposite his name in the club books, "won only £12,000 during the last two months, retired in disgust, March 21, 1772; and that he may never return is the ardent wish of members."

The entries in this volume deal with all sorts of subjects, and range from a bet of five hundred guineas

to ten that none of the Cabinet were beheaded by that day three years, to one of fifty that Mlle. Heinel does not dance at the Opera House next winter.

Brooks's possesses a good deal of silver-plate, which taken in the aggregate is valued at some £4,000. The oldest piece is a marrow-spoon of 1793, whilst perhaps the most interesting part of the collection is a number of candlesticks, all Georgian.

There are in Brooks's two snuff-boxes—an antique one of mother-of-pearl, and another of early Victorian date and design.

The tranquillity for which this club is noted has rarely been disturbed in recent times, but in 1886, when Mr. Gladstone introduced his Home Rule Bill, Brooks's became much perturbed and troubled by discord quite out of keeping with the traditions of its sacred precincts. A member who had been in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet, and who, it was said, had many years before been himself "blackballed" when a candidate, was declared to have spoken contemptuously of the Liberal Unionists as he descended the stairs of the club, where he had been dining as a guest. The irate Liberal Unionists immediately discovered an easy way of revenge. As luck would have it, the son of the ex-Minister came up for election almost immediately after his father's ill-timed outburst of eloquence, and was swiftly made to experience the same fate which had befallen his parent many years before. As a consequence of this the supporters of Mr. Gladstone, at the next opportunity, revenged themselves by treating the eldest son of a Whig Unionist peer in the same way.

Feeling began to run high, and at each successive election the circle of carnage widened and widened, until it began to be whispered that it would soon be impossible for anybody to be elected to Brooks's at all. Matters began to look very serious—one member even declared that the shade of Fox had been observed flitting about the passages ; and though another member surmised that it was only the solid figure of an ancient servitor of the club with a bottle of port in his hand, which had been mistaken for the shade of the statesman, both agreed in acknowledging that the situation was becoming extremely grave. Happily, at this juncture Lord Granville came to the rescue, and at the next election made a speech which caused a general reconciliation. In a few well-chosen words he alluded to the antiquity of the club, and the previous divisions in the party which it had survived, and expressed a hope—using almost the words which Burke had employed in a slightly different connection—which he believed all present in their hearts really shared, that there should at least be one place left in London where a truce might be allowed to the divisions and animosities of mankind, and friends might still be allowed to meet one another on the same terms as of old.

Lord Granville's speech produced a great effect, as the taking of the ballot proved ; for all the candidates, irrespective of their shades of political opinion, were elected. Lord Granville afterwards declared that he had never felt so nervous in his life.

In the earlier days of its existence, Brooks's, like

so many other West End resorts, was the scene of much high gambling, and large sums often changed hands.

Samuel Wilberforce, when he first joined the club, took part (he afterwards declared) from mere shyness in a game of faro, George Selwyn in the bank. A friend, astonished, called out, "What, Wilberforce, is that you?" Selwyn quite resented the interference, and, turning to him, said in his most expressive tone: "Oh, sir, don't interrupt Mr. Wilberforce; he could not be better employed."

As a matter of fact, this was not the sole occasion upon which Wilberforce played, for he once kept the bank at Goosetree's, which Pitt also frequented. Another member, Mr. Bankes, in the absence of a banker, playfully offered the philanthropist a guinea to do so.

Wilberforce, as it happened, was very lucky, and rose the winner of £600. He afterwards declared that the pain he felt at winning so much money from young men who could not afford to lose without inconvenience cured him of all partiality for play.

Goosetree's consisted almost exclusively of budding orators and statesmen, but there was a good deal of gambling there.

One of the largest winners at Brooks's in the days of high play was Alderman Combe, the brewer. One evening, whilst he was Lord Mayor, he chanced to be engaged at a hazard-table there, Beau Brummell being one of the party. "Come, Mash-tub," said Brummell, who was the caster, "what do you set?" "Twenty-five guineas," answered the Alder-

man. "Well, then," returned the Beau, "have at the '*mare's*' pony." He continued to throw until he drove home the brewer's twelve ponies running ; and then, getting up and making him a low bow, whilst pocketing the cash, he said: "Thank you, Alderman ; for the future I shall never drink any porter but yours." "I wish, sir," replied the brewer, "that every other blackguard in London would tell me the same."

A very successful whist-player at Brooks's was Sir Philip Francis, by some supposed to have written the "*Letters of Junius.*" He had held an appointment in Calcutta, where play flourished, and, devoting his attention to the game, became extraordinarily successful. It was said that his winnings amounted to £30,000, and eventually he was able to return to England a rich man. As a clubman he was noted for his vitriolic utterances.

Sir Philip had been the convivial companion of Fox, and during the short administration of that statesman was made a Knight of the Bath. One evening Roger Wilbraham came up to a whist-table at the club where Sir Philip, who for the first time wore the ribbon of the Order, was engaged in a rubber, and thus accosted him. Laying hold of the ribbon and examining it for some time, he said: "So this is the way they have rewarded you at last; they have given you a little bit of red ribbon for your services, Sir Philip, have they ? A pretty bit of red ribbon to hang about your neck. And that satisfies you, does it ? Now, I wonder what I shall have ? What do you think they will give me, Sir Philip ?"

The newly-made Knight, who had twenty-five guineas depending on the rubber, and who was not very well pleased at the interruption, suddenly turned round, and, looking at him fiercely, exclaimed : “ A halter, and be d——d to you !”

Other great whist-players were the two Smiths, father and son, the first a retired Major-General of the Indian Army, who brought home £150,000, and was known as Hyder Ali in the West End. The son was called Tippoo, and, like his father, was a fine whist-player. Indeed, at one time Tippoo Smith was considered the best of his day. Another whist-playing member, an old gentleman nicknamed Neptune, was not so successful ; indeed, he once flung himself into the sea in a fit of despair, as it was said, “ not being able to keep his head above water.” He was, however, fished out in time, and, finding he was still solvent, played on during the remainder of his life.

Even in the days when considerable laxity prevailed as to club elections, Brooks’s was very strict in such matters. As a matter of fact, George IV, when Prince of Wales, was the only member of Brooks’s who entered the club without being elected by ballot. He was anxious to belong to it in order to have more frequent intercourse with Fox, and on his first appearance every member got up and welcomed him by acclamation.

Fox, soon after he had got to know Sheridan, was so delighted with his company and brilliant conversation that he became exceedingly anxious to get him admitted as a member of this club, which

he himself was in the habit of frequenting every night. Sheridan was accordingly proposed, and though on several occasions every gentleman was earnestly canvassed to vote for him, yet he was always found to have one black ball whenever he was balloted for, which was, of course, sufficient to prevent his election.

When Sheridan entered the House of Commons in September, 1780, the members of Fox's party were particularly anxious to get him into the club, which was no easy task, as they well knew. George Selwyn and the Earl of Bessborough, who both hated Sheridan, agreed not to absent themselves during the time allotted by the regulations of the club for ballots ; and as one black ball sufficed to exclude a candidate, they twice prevented his election (once in 1778, when proposed by Fox).

This exclusion of Sheridan from Brooks's was the subject of much comment, and, according to one story, some of his friends resolved to find out who the person was that so inveterately opposed the admission of the orator. Accordingly the balls were marked, and old George Selwyn (whose aristocratic prejudices would have induced him to black-ball His Majesty himself, if he could not produce proofs of noble descent for three generations at least) was discovered to be the hostile party. This was told the same evening to Sheridan, who desired that his name might be put up again as usual, and the matter be left entirely in his hands.

The next evening when there happened to be another election, Sheridan arrived at Brooks's, arm in arm with the Prince of Wales, just ten minutes

before the balloting began. Being shown into the candidates' waiting-room, the waiter was ordered to tell Mr. Selwyn that the Prince desired to speak with him in the room below-stairs immediately. Selwyn obeyed the summons without delay, and Sheridan entertained him for half an hour with a political story, which interested him very much, but which, of course, was a pure invention.

During this time the ballot proceeded, Sheridan being duly elected. The satisfactory result was announced to the Prince and the successful candidate by the entrance of the waiter, who made the preconcerted signal by stroking his chin with his hand. Sheridan immediately got up, and, apologizing for an absence of a few minutes, told Selwyn "that the Prince would finish the narrative, the end of which he would find very remarkable."

Sheridan then went upstairs, and was formally introduced to the members by Fox, being welcomed in the most flattering manner.

The Prince, however, was left in a very awkward position, for, not having paid much attention to the nonsensical story told by Sheridan to Selwyn, he found himself all at sea. After floundering about for some time, he at last burst out with: "To tell you the truth, I know as little about this infernal story which Sherry has left me to finish as an unborn child; but never mind, Selwyn, let's go upstairs, and I dare say Fox, or some of them, will be able to tell you all about it."

Accordingly the couple proceeded to the club-room, where the puzzled Selwyn soon had his eyes completely opened to the whole manœuvre, when,

on his entrance, Sheridan, rising, made him a low bow, and thus addressed him :

“ ‘Pon my honour, Mr. Selwyn, I beg pardon for being absent so long ; but the fact is, I happened to drop into devilish good company. They have just been making me a member without even one black ball, and here I am.”

“ The devil they have !” exclaimed Selwyn.

“ Facts speak for themselves,” replied Sheridan ; “ and as I know you are very glad of my election, accept my grateful thanks ” (pressing his hand on his breast and bowing very low) “ for your friendly suffrage. And now, if you will sit down by me, I’ll finish my story, for I dare say His Royal Highness has found considerable difficulty in doing so.”

At first Selwyn was extremely wroth at the trick which had been played upon him, but before the evening was out he shook hands with Sheridan and welcomed him to the club.

Unfortunately for the reliability of this story, the records of Brooks’s show conclusively that, so far as the Prince and Lord Bessborough are concerned, it is without foundation. Sheridan was returned for Stafford, September 12, 1780. Mr. Fitzpatrick proposed him at Brooks’s on October 12 in the same year, and he was elected on November 2 ; but Lord Bessborough did not become a member till 1782, nor was the Prince of Wales one till 1783.

Many of Sheridan’s *bons mots* were recounted in the club years after his death. During a conversation one day about Lord Henry Petty’s projected tax upon iron, one member said that, as there was so much opposition to it, it would be better to raise

the proposed sum upon coals. "Hold, my dear fellow!" said Sheridan; "that would be out of the frying-pan into the fire with a vengeance."

On another occasion, Sheridan, having been told that Mr. Gifford, the Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, had boasted of the power of conferring and distributing literary reputation, said: "Yes, and in the present instance I think he has done it so profusely as to have left none for himself."

Another wit at Brooks's was Dunning, Lord Ashburton, a somewhat eccentric member. Though he only lived to the age of fifty-two, and although he was very liberal and extravagant, he had made no less than £150,000 during twenty-five years' practice at the Bar.

In spite of the fact that his name does not appear in the club list, the notorious duellist, George Robert Fitzgerald, who was executed for a cold-blooded murder in 1786, must in a sort of way be regarded as having belonged to the club. He was, however, only in it once, though it was his boast that he had been unanimously chosen a member. The history of this is curious.

Owing to Fitzgerald's well-known duelling propensities, no first-class London club would admit him. Nevertheless, he got Admiral Keith Stewart, who knew that he must fight or comply, to propose him for Brooks's. Accordingly, the duellist went with the Admiral on the day of the election to the club-house, and waited downstairs whilst the ballot was in progress.

The result, a foregone conclusion, was unfavourable to the candidate, not even one white ball being

among the black, the Admiral having been among the first to deposit his. Nevertheless, to him it was decided should fall the dangerous task of announcing the result to Fitzgerald. He did not, however, care for such a mission at all.

"I proposed the fellow," said he, "because I knew you would not admit him; but, by Jove! I have no inclination to risk my life against that of a madman."

"But, Admiral," replied the Duke of Devonshire, "there being no white ball in the box, he must know that you have blackballed him as well as the rest, and he is sure to call you out in any case."

Eventually it was decided that the waiter should tell Fitzgerald that there was one black ball, and that his name must be put up again if he wished it. In the mean time Fitzgerald had frequently rung the bell to inquire "the state of the poll," and had sent several waiters to ascertain, but none daring to return, Mr. Brooks took the message from the waiter who was descending the staircase, and boldly entered the room with a coffee equipage in his hand.

"Did you call for coffee, sir?" said Mr. Brooks smartly.

"D——n your coffee, sir, and you too!" answered Mr. Fitzgerald, in a voice which made the host's blood run cold. "I want to know, sir—and that without one moment's delay, sir—if I am chose yet?"

"Oh, sir," replied Mr. Brooks, attempting to smile away the appearance of fear, "I beg your pardon, sir, but I was just coming to announce to you, sir, with Admiral Stewart's compliments, sir, that, unfortunately, there was one black ball in the box, sir,

and consequently, by the rules of the club, sir, no candidate can be admitted without a new election, sir, which cannot take place, by the standing regulations of the club, sir, until one month from this time, sir."

Thrusting aside Brooks, who protested that non-members might not enter the club rooms, Fitzgerald flew upstairs, and entered the room without any further ceremony than a bow, saying to the members, who indignantly rose at the intrusion: "Your servant, gentlemen; I beg ye will be sated."

Walking up to the fireplace, he thus addressed Admiral Stewart: "So, my dear Admiral, Mr. Brooks informs me that I have been elected three times."

"You have been balloted for, Mr. Fitzgerald, but I am sorry to say you have not been chosen," said Stewart.

"Well, then," replied the duellist, "did you blackball me?"

"My good sir," answered the Admiral, "how could you suppose such a thing?"

"Oh, I supposed no such thing, my dear fellow; I only want to know who it was that dropped the black balls in by accident, as it were."

Fitzgerald now went up to each individual member, and put the same question to all in turn, "Did you blackball me, sir?" until he made the round of the whole club, and in each case he received a reply similar to that of the Admiral. When he had finished his investigations, he thus addressed the whole body: "You see, gentlemen, that, as none of ye have blackballed me, I must be

elected—it is Mr. Brooks that has made the mistake. I was convinced it would end in this way, and am only sorry that so much time has been lost as to prevent honourable gentlemen from enjoying each other's company sooner." He then desired the waiter to bring him a bottle of champagne, that he might drink long life to the club and wish them joy of their unanimous election of a "raal gentleman by father and mother, and who never missed his man."

After this nothing more was said by the members, who determined to ignore the presence of their dangerous visitor, who drank three bottles of champagne in enforced silence, for no one would answer him when he spoke. With cool effrontery the latter sat drinking toasts and healths, to the terror of the waiter. At length everyone was much relieved to see him rise and prepare to depart. Before going, however, he took leave with a low bow, at the same time promising to "come earlier next night and have a little more of it." It was then agreed that half a dozen stout constables should be in waiting the next evening to bear him off to the watch-house if he attempted again to intrude, but Mr. Fitzgerald, aware probably of the reception he might get, never did.

The eccentricities of Fighting Fitzgerald bordered closely upon madness, and there is, indeed, reason to think that he was insane. According to the custom of his day, he had in early life been obliged to fight a duel with a man called Swords, who at the first discharge of his pistol had shot off a part of Fitzgerald's skull, materially injuring the fore part

of his brain. The consequence was delirium for a considerable time ; but those who knew him intimately were of opinion that he was affected by a certain aberration of intellect until the day of his death, for from the period of this wound he became hot-headed, insolent, quarrelsome, cunning, and ferocious.

In the more turbulent days of the past, incidents occurred in clubland which would now be impossible.

On one occasion, about three o'clock in the morning, the Duke of York, Colonel St. Leger, Tom Stepney, and others, came up St. James's Street in very rollicking mood, and, reaching Brooks's, knocked in vain for admission, everyone being asleep. They were determined, however, to get in, and, when the door was at length cautiously held open, rushed into the inner hall. They commenced the destruction of chairs, tables, and chandeliers, and kicked up such a horrible din as might have awakened the dead. Every male and female servant in the establishment now came running towards the hall from all quarters, in a state of semi-nudity, anxious to assist in protecting the house or to escape from the supposed housebreakers. During this riot there was no light, and the uproar made by the maid-servants, who in the confusion rushed into the arms of the intruders, and expected nothing short of immediate violence and murder, was most tremendous.

At length one of the waiters ran for a loaded blunderbuss, which, having been cocked, and poised on an angle of the banisters, he would have discharged amongst the intruders. From doing this,

however, he was most providentially deterred by the housekeeper, who, with no other covering than her chemise and flannel petticoat, was fast approaching with a light, which no sooner flashed upon the faces of these midnight disturbers than she exclaimed : “ For Heaven’s sake, Tom, don’t fire ! It is only the Duke of York ! ” The terror of the servants having vanished by this timely address, the intruding party soon became more peaceable, and were sent home in sedan-chairs to their respective homes.

At that time many a challenge was given and accepted within the club walls. One evening Fox, in the course of conversation, spoke disparagingly of the gunpowder issued by the Government. Adams, who was in some measure responsible for the supply, considered it a reflection, and sent Fox a challenge. Fox went out, and took his station, giving a full front. Adams said : “ You must stand sideways.” Fox said : “ Why, I am as thick one way as the other.” “ Fire ” was given. Adams fired, Fox did not ; and when they said he must, he said : “ I’ll be d——d if I do ! I have no quarrel.” They then advanced to shake hands. Fox said : “ Adams, you’d have killed me if it had not been Government powder.”

Dandy Raikes, though a member of Brooks’s, had never been known to enter the club, till one day in March 1827 he saw Lord Brougham go in, upon which he followed, and grossly insulted him during luncheon, with the result that a challenge became inevitable. Lord Brougham applied to General Ferguson, who had heard part at least of

the insulting expressions, to convey a challenge for him to Raikes. This, however, the General peremptorily declined to do, upon the grounds of having been mixed up in so many similar affairs. Brougham eventually got General Sir Robert Wilson to deliver the challenge ; but in the mean time he had been taken into custody, carried to Bow Street, and bound over to keep the peace. "This was owing to Jack the Painter, alias Spring Rice, who had been present at the row, and had immediately hastened to Bow Street to inform ; his object, no doubt, being not to lose Brougham's vote that night upon that most vital of all subjects, the Catholic question."

The Hon. Frederick Byng, known as "the Poodle," from his curly hair, was a very well-known member of Brooks's. He was one of the hundred additional members selected in 1816 by the special committee, was a prominent figure in London society, and had had many interesting experiences. As a very small boy he had acted as a page of honour to Prince George of Wales at his ill-starred marriage with the Princess Caroline in 1795, and used to relate the curious incident of his being taken to Carlton House to be looked at by the Prince before appointment. He was in Paris in December 1815, and was present at the execution of Marshal Ney.

As an old man, the Poodle was very autocratic in his ways, and something of a bully. He once severely reprimanded a younger member for lighting his cigar beneath the balcony outside the club, which no longer exists. On one occasion Mr. Byng

was much disturbed to find seated before the fire in the drawing-room a gentleman who, having pulled off his boots, had rung the bell and asked the waiter for slippers! It turned out that the perpetrator of this outrage was a new member, an M.P. for some manufacturing constituency, who, of strangely unconventional habits quite unknown to the committee, had been elected without anyone troubling or caring much about him, and who presumably would have been more at home in a commercial room than in the sacred precincts of the club.

Brooks's is connected with an unsolved historical mystery, through one of its members—Mr. Benjamin Bathurst (elected in May 1808)—a diplomatist who disappeared in an unaccountable fashion, whilst on a mission from Vienna to England in 1809, and was never heard of again.

Mr. Bathurst had been sent to Vienna by his relative, Lord Bathurst, at that time Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It is believed that the latter sent his kinsman to the Court of Vienna in order to induce Austria to go to war with Napoleon, a mission which was completely successful.

Mr. Bathurst on this account entertained a strong belief that the great Emperor bore him special enmity, and therefore, when the war was over, apprehending, it is said, danger on the road, he resolved to return to London by way of Berlin and North Germany. For this journey he assumed the name of Koch, whilst his private secretary acted as courier, under the name of Fisher.

About midday on November 25, 1809, the two

travellers with a valet arrived at Perleberg, on the route from Berlin to Hamburg, halted at the post-house for refreshments, and ordered fresh horses for the journey to Lenzen, which was the next station. Near the post-house was an inn—the White Swan—to which Bathurst went and ordered an early dinner, the horses not to be put in until he had dined. The White Swan was not far from the gate of the town, through which the road to Hamburg lay, and outside of it was a poor suburb of cottages and artisans' houses. After lunch Bathurst inquired who was in command of the soldiers quartered in the town; and having been directed to his address, he called upon Captain Klitzing, the officer named, and requested that he might be given a guard in the inn, saying that he was a traveller on his way to Hamburg, and that he had strong and well-grounded suspicions that his person was endangered. During this visit it is significant that he showed great signs of agitation and fear. Captain Klitzing, though he laughed at Mr. Bathurst's apprehensions, nevertheless gave him a guard of a couple of soldiers.

When the latter reached the White Swan he countermanded the horses, saying he would not start till night, considering that it would be safer to travel along the dangerous portion of the route by night, when Napoleon's spies would be less likely to be on the alert, and remained in the inn writing and burning papers. At seven o'clock he dismissed his guard, and ordered the horses to be ready at nine. He stood outside the inn, watching his portmanteau being replaced in the carriage,

stepped round to the heads of the horses, and disappeared for ever.

After Bathurst's disappearance had been realized—which was not for some time—every effort was made to discover what had become of him. The next morning the river was dragged, outhouses, woods, marshes, ditches were examined, but not a trace could be found ; nor was any trace ever found, except that nearly three weeks later—December 16—two poor women, gathering sticks in a wood, found a pair of breeches which were unquestionably Bathurst's. In the pocket was a paper with writing on it. Two bullet-holes were in the breeches, but no traces of blood about them, which could hardly have been the case had the bullets struck a man wearing them. The paper was a half-finished letter to Mrs. Bathurst, scratched in pencil, stating that he was afraid he would never reach England, and that his ruin would be the work of Count d'Entraigues. Large rewards were offered—£1,000 by the English Government, another £1,000 by the family, and an additional 100 Friedrichs d'or by Prince Frederick of Prussia ; but all was in vain, and from that day to this the fate of Mr. Bathurst remains a mystery.*

No account of Brooks's and its history would be complete without some mention of the Fox Club—a club within a club which holds its meetings in the club-house three or four times in the course of the Parliamentary session, and whose object is to keep alive the memory of probably the most distinguished,

* In December 1910, some woodcutters in the forest of Quitznow, near the spot where the breeches were found, discovered a skeleton which may have been that of Bathurst.

and certainly the most popular member who has ever belonged to Brooks's—Charles James Fox.

Owing to Fox's love of play, some of his best friends, who would appear to have been inspired by extraordinary affection, were half-ruined in annuities, given by them as securities for him to the Jews. Annuities of Fox and his society to the value of £500,000 a year were at one time advertised to be sold. Walpole wondered what Fox would do when he had sold the estates of all his friends.

He once sat at hazard at Almack's from Tuesday evening, the 4th, till five in the afternoon of Wednesday, the 5th. An hour before he had recovered £12,000 that he had lost, and by dinner, which was at five o'clock, he had ended by losing £11,000. On the Thursday (February 6, 1772) he made a speech on the Thirty-nine Articles, in which one is hardly surprised to hear that he did not shine. That evening he dined at half-past eleven at night, and went to White's, where he drank till seven the next morning; thence to Almack's, where he won £6,000; and between three and four in the afternoon he set out for Newmarket. Well for him that there was no Nonconformist conscience in those days!

Fox during a late club-sitting once sketched out an idea for a kind of new profession, "which was going from horse-race to horse-race, and so by knowing the value and speed of all the horses in England to acquire a certain fortune."

As a youth Fox had received a very lax training from his father, who gave him a large allowance and condoned his extravagances. "Let nothing be done," said his lordship, "to break his spirit; the

world will do that for him." At his death, in 1774, he left him £154,000 to pay his debts ; it was all hypothecated, and Fox soon became as deeply involved as before.

The chronicle of Fox's financial vicissitudes makes sorry reading—at one time with thousands in his pocket, at another without a shilling to pay his chairmen.

After a run of good luck, Fox would generally make some attempt to liquidate the more pressing of his many liabilities ; and on one occasion, when Fortune had been propitious, remembering a long-standing gambling debt which he owed to Sir John Lade, he sent a complimentary card to the latter expressing his desire to discharge the claim. Sir John no sooner saw the money than he called for pen and ink, and began to make some calculations. "What now?" cried Fox. "Only calculating the interest," replied the other. "Are you so?" coolly rejoined Charles James, and pocketed the cash, adding : "I thought it was a debt of honour. As you seem to consider it a trading debt, and as I make it an invariable rule to pay my Jew creditors last, you must wait a little longer for your money."

Fox once played cards with Fitzpatrick at Brooks's from ten o'clock at night till near six o'clock the next morning, a waiter standing by to tell them "whose deal it was," they being too sleepy to know.

The precise circumstances which led to the foundation of the Fox Club are rather obscure, the first recorded dinner having taken place in February 1829, when twenty-three members were present,

though “Fox Dinners” seem to have been held previous to that date.

Until 1843 the Fox Club met at the Clarendon, but in that year, on an application signed by sixteen members of the Fox Club, a rule was passed granting permission to that body to use the great room at Brooks’s for their meetings. Of these, the first always takes place on the Thursday following the meeting of Parliament, the second and third as may be fixed by the club in the course of the session, and the fourth at Greenwich in July.

No speeches are allowed, and only the four following toasts are given, without “note or comment”:

1. “In the memory of Charles James Fox.”
2. “Earl Grey and the Reform Bill.”
3. “The memory of Lord Holland.”

This third toast was added by unanimous resolution on April 24, 1841, and on June 5 following, on motion previously given by Sir Robert Adair and Mr. Clive, £200 were voted from the funds of the club towards the monument proposed to be erected to his memory, now just inside the railings of Holland House, on the Hammersmith Road.

On the pedestal of the monument in question are inscribed the following lines :

“Nephew of Fox, and friend of Grey,
Be this my highest fame :
That those who know me best will say,
‘He tarnished neither name.’”

4. “To the memory of Lord John Russell”—added on June 22, 1878, on the motion of Mr. Grenville Berkeley. As originally proposed, the toast

was to the memory of "Earl Russell," but at the next meeting it was unanimously carried that the style by which he had been best known should be adopted. This was done with the full approval of Lady Russell, whose wishes in the matter had been consulted.

Before leaving the clubs of St. James's Street, two quaintly-named institutions—the Thatched House and the Cocoa-tree—claim some attention. The latter club-house is remarkable for the golden tree which, spreading through two floors, is visible from the street.

The Cocoa-tree Club originated from the Tory chocolate-house of the same name which flourished in the days of Queen Anne. This was converted into a club, probably before 1746, when the house was the headquarters of the Jacobite party in Parliament. It is thus referred to in the above year by Horace Walpole, in a letter to George Montagu : "The Duke has given Brigadier Mordaunt the Pretender's coach, on condition he rode up to London in it. 'That I will, sir,' said he, 'and drive till it stops of its own accord at the Cocoa-tree.' "

About 1780 very high play prevailed there. Writing to Mann in February of that year, Horace Walpole says : " Within this week there has been a cast at hazard at the Cocoa-tree (in St. James's Street), the difference of which amounted to one hundred and fourscore thousand pounds. Mr. O'Birne, an Irish gamester, had won one hundred thousand pounds of a young Mr. Harvey of Chigwell, just started into an estate by his elder brother's death. O'Birne said : ' You can never pay me.'

‘I can,’ said the youth ; ‘my estate will sell for the debt.’ ‘No,’ was the reply ; ‘I will win ten thousand —you shall throw for the odd ninety.’ They did, and Harvey won.”

Though never as fashionable a resort as White’s or Brooks’s, the Cocoa-tree was frequented by many aristocratic sportsmen. Here it was that Sir Harry Vane came after the victory of his famous horse Hambletonian in the great match with Mr. Cookson’s Diamond in 1799.

“At the Cocoa-tree,” wrote Horace Walpole in 1770, “Lord Stavordale, not one-and-twenty, lost eleven thousand last Tuesday, but recovered it by one great hand at hazard. He swore a great oath : ‘Now, if I had been playing deep, I might have won millions.’”

Sir Robert Macraith had for several years been head-waiter at the Cocoa-tree, where he was known by the appellation of Bob, and at length rose from that humble situation to the rank of Baronet. He was a clever, good-natured, civil fellow, and greatly liked. When he himself succeeded to the business, he was rather puzzled as to what would be the most appropriate name for his house. George Selwyn calling in one morning, he stated the difficulty to him, saying that he was afraid “Bob’s Coffee-house” would sound rather queerly. “Oh no,” said George, “just the thing; for then it will be Bob without, and robbing [Robin] within.”

Councillor Dunning and Dr. Brocklesby one evening at the Cocoa-tree were conversing on the superfluities of life, and the needless wants which men in society created for their own discomfort.

Selwyn, whose aristocratic notions were such as to look with contempt on occupations of all sorts—on that of a medical man as well as that of a tailor—exclaimed : “Very true, gentlemen ; I am myself an example of the justice of your remarks, for I have lived nearly all my life without wanting either a lawyer or a physician.”

George Selwyn was an occasional visitor here, and on one occasion happened to be present when a general officer in the American War was describing to the company the phenomena of certain hot and cold springs, which he said he had frequently found quite close to each other, during his campaign in the south-western territory. Just as Selwyn entered the room, he was saying that fish of various sorts abounded in the latter, and that all that those of the army who were fond of fish had to do, after the fatigue of a day’s march, in order to provide a dinner, was to angle for a few moments with a string and hook in the cold spring, and, as soon as the bait took, to pull out the fish and pop it in the hot one, where it was boiled in the twinkling of an eye!

This marvellous account operated differently on the several gentlemen present ; some were incredulous, others amazed, whilst all agreed that it was exceedingly curious.

“There is nothing at all surprising in the General’s narrative, gentlemen,” said Selwyn, “and, indeed, I myself can vouch for the truth of it ; for when I was in France I was witness to similar phenomena. In Auvergne there are springs similar to those in America, but with this remarkable addition, that there is generally a third, containing hot parsley

and butter. Accordingly, the peasants and others who go a-fishing usually carry with them large wooden bowls or ladles, so that, after the fish has been cooked according to the General's receipt, they have a most delicious sauce provided for it at the same moment! You seem to doubt my veracity, gentlemen ; therefore I only beg that those who are incredulous may set out for France as soon as they please, and see the thing with their own eyes."

"But, Mr. Selwyn," said the General, "consider the improbability of parsley and butter."

"I beg your pardon, my good sir," interrupted George ; "I gave you full credit for your story, and you are surely too polite not to believe mine."

A constant frequenter of the Cocoa-tree was the eleventh Duke of Norfolk, who, it may be added, was the first member of the House of Lords to abandon pigtail and hair-powder. Discarding the traditions of his family, he became a nominal Protestant, in order to avoid the political disabilities under which the Roman Catholics of his day suffered. He sat in Parliament, first as Earl of Surrey in the Commons, and afterwards in the Upper House as Duke. A coarse-looking man who looked rather like a butcher, his life was mainly passed in clubs and coffee-houses ; he is, indeed, said to have never been so happy as when dining at the Beefsteak or the Thatched House, or breakfasting or supping at the Cocoa-tree. When under the influence of wine he would say that, "in spite of his having swallowed the Protestant oath, there were, at all events, three good

Catholics in Parliament—Lord Nugent, Gascoyne, and himself," so little store did he set on religion. A very heavy drinker, he could swallow unlimited quantities of wine.

The Duke, in spite of his convivial habits, was very proud of being the head of all the Howards. On one occasion at the Cocoa-tree he declared that it had been his intention to commemorate in 1783 the "tercentenary" anniversary of the creation of his dukedom by giving a dinner at his house in St. James's Square to every person whom he could ascertain to be descended in the male line from the loins of the first Duke. "But having discovered already," he added, "nearly six thousand persons who claimed to be of the family, a great number of whom are in very obscure or indigent circumstances, and believing, as I do, that as many more may be in existence, I have abandoned the design."

The Duke was a constant speaker at public meetings at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, and was deprived of his command of a militia regiment for proposing as a toast, "The People, the Source of Power."

The Thatched House Club probably derives its rural name from an inn which had existed in the days when St. James's was a veritable hospital, and not a palace. When the Court settled at St. James's, it was frequented by persons of fashion, and grew gradually in importance. In 1711 it appears still to have been a very modest hostelry, and even when the Thatched House had grown into a recognized rendezvous of wits, politicians, and men of fashion, Lord Thurlow alluded to it,

during one of the debates on the Regency Bill, as the “ale-house.” In the days of Pitt and Fox, however, it had become one of the chief taverns at the West End, and had added to its premises a large room for public dinners.

The Thatched House was a favourite resort of Sheridan’s. One sharp frosty day, when he was sitting here writing a letter, the Prince of Wales came in and ordered a rump-steak. The day happened to be an excessively cold one, and the Prince ordered a bumper of brandy and water straight away. Having emptied the glass in a twinkling, he called for a second and a third, which also having swallowed, he said, puffing out his cheeks and shrugging his shoulders: “Now I am warm and comfortable; bring me my steak.” The order was instantly obeyed, but before His Royal Highness had eaten the first mouthful Sheridan presented him with the following lines, which greatly increased his good-humour:

“The Prince came in, and said ‘twas cold,
Then put to his head the rummer;
Till swallow after swallow came,
When he pronounced it summer.”

The original Thatched House Tavern was demolished in 1814. The ground-floor front consisted of a range of low-built shops, including that of Rowland, the fashionable hairdresser of Macassar fame. The newer Thatched House Tavern stood on the site of the present Conservative Club, to build which it was pulled down in 1843, when it was moved to another house a few doors nearer to the gate of the palace.

The Thatched House Club will probably be long remembered by lovers of Art as having been the abode of the great collector, the late Mr. George Salting, whose rooms above the club were filled with priceless pictures and *objets d'art*. The Thatched House was, I believe, the only club to which he belonged.



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